

THE
W O N D E R S
O F
R E D E E M I N G L O V E :

BEING AN
E S S A Y
O N T H E
R E A S O N S

W H Y

God Redeemed Fallen Man, and not Fallen Angels.

WITH
PRACTICAL IMPROVEMENTS.

BY CHARLES OWEN. *k*

God is Love. 1 John iv. 8.

B E R W I C K :
PRINTED FOR W. PHORSON; B. LAW, AVE-
MARIA-LANE, LONDON.

M D C C X C I.

1040
6



b
t
a

n
li
d
d
w
p
e

TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

ELIZABETH LADY RUSSEL.

MADAM,

I Presume to do myself the honour of inscribing this small Essay to your ladyship's name, induced thereunto not by endowments common to the age, but those that constitute the character of an accomplished christian.

WHILE others who enjoy the upper stations in this lower world, pass away life, in fruitless amusements, among shadows of pomp and grandeur; you, Madam, realize the invisibilities of another world into your mind, and study to surpass others in goodness, as much as you excel them in rank and dignity.

iv THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

How happy should we be, if all those, who shine in the same advanced circumstances, entertained themselves as wisely; and discovered the same strict regard to the laws of virtue, the only true and genuine source of honour.

To have sentiments of mind equal to your quality, to be humble in such an exalted condition, to have greatness tempered with so much real goodness, to be moderate in a high fortune, and in the midst of free and full fruitions, to be always easy to yourself, and in all relations and capacities acceptable to others, are instances of a mind truly noble; instances that attract the admiration of all who have the honour and happiness of your ladyship's acquaintance.

YOUR pious and ardent zeal for the Redeemer's interest, and your readiness to support protestantism in opposition to profaneness and popery in all its forms, revive in me the images of your noble and dear relatives, those truly christian worthies, who fell victims to popish rage and antichristian tyranny; I mean the
ever

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY. V

ever honourable Lord Ruffel, and Lady Lyle.

To say less would be unjust in me, to say more would be uneasy to you, whose temper is as sollicitous to shun praises, as it is assiduous to deserve them.

May your ladyship's days be long and bright, your last moments serene and comfortable; may you be long happy in your dear consort, that example of consummate virtue.

I recommend you and yours to the divine care and conduct, and beg you will do me the honour to believe, that with sentiments of great esteem and respects,

I am,

Warrington,
Nov. 5. 1722.

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's

Most humble Servant,

C. OWEN.

THE
P R E F A C E.

IN the following Essay, you have a faint draught of that love which indeed passeth all understanding ; it is easier to adore it with rapturous and silent admiration, than describe the wonders of it in words.

The highest rhetoric is too flat to declare the demensions of redeeming love, the greatness of which is but imperfectly expressed, even by the exalted epithets of wonderful and unconceivable.

Here infinite mercy appears in its brightest lustre, divine love in the richest attire, and grace in its greatest beauty : the Father of mercies, to spare man, engraves the marks of his righteous indignation on his dear Son ; the Son submits, and dies a victim to vindictive justice. Transcendent love ! Love beyond all imagination !

How

How happy was Adam in his paradisaical state? But the splendor of his original felicity is eclipsed by the more dazzling beams of evangelical happiness.

How conspicuous are the effusions of divine goodness in the world of nature! but that grace which adorns the creation, vanishes before the light of this more magnificent love.

How happy are the holy angels! how large their portion of grace! But when redeeming goodness shines forth as the rising sun, their grace disappears like the morning star; our recovery is their astonishment, and subject of their hallelujahs: O! let us join with them in anthems of praise, and long to be above, where he, who on earth was a man of sorrows, shines with unclouded glory, and where we shall be replenished with those joys that are ineffable and permanent.

Let there be no contention among us about Christ, but who shall love him most, and serve him best; this will be matter of rejoicing, not only to hearers, but ministers: for what is our hope, or joy,

joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming.

That the name of the Lord Jesus may be magnified, and that his kingdom, which is not of this world, may come in its power and purity, are the fervent prayers of

Your humble Servant,

C. OWEN.

THE
C O N T E N T S.

C H A P. I.

Introduction. The text explained. The redemption of fallen man, and rejection of fallen angels very astonishing. Reasons of the wonder. Adam's sin in effect the same with that of angels, Both very early in the transgression. The malignity and aggravations of Adam's sin. God's positive law, the test of Man's obedience. God's grant and speech to Adam. Adam's reply. God no gainer by man's redemption. Man inferior to angels before and after the fall. Page 1.

C H A P. II.

An inquiry into the reasons why man was not forsaken as well as angels. The sin of angels not greater than that of man. The recovery of man not a more honourable or more easy work. No greater attractives in mankind than angels. God

no less kind to Adam before the fall than to angels. The cry of man's misery nor greater than that of angels. Fallen angels no more able to recover themselves than fallen man. God under no greater obligation to man than to angels. P. 31.

C H A P. III.

Some conjectures why fallen angels are not redeemed. All mankind fell in Adam, but all the angels did not fall, when some of them revolted. Adam had a tempter, which they had not. Angels sinned by their own proper will, whereas Adam's posterity sinned only by the will of their first parents. The Angels sinned against greater light, they moved in a higher orb. Were ringleaders in sin, and the first rebels. Refused subjection to Jesus Christ in our nature. P. 56.

C H A P. IV.

The peculiar misery of unbelievers. The wonderful honour conferred on the human nature. The impossibility of salvation without the death of Christ. The grand reason of

THE PREFACE.

xi

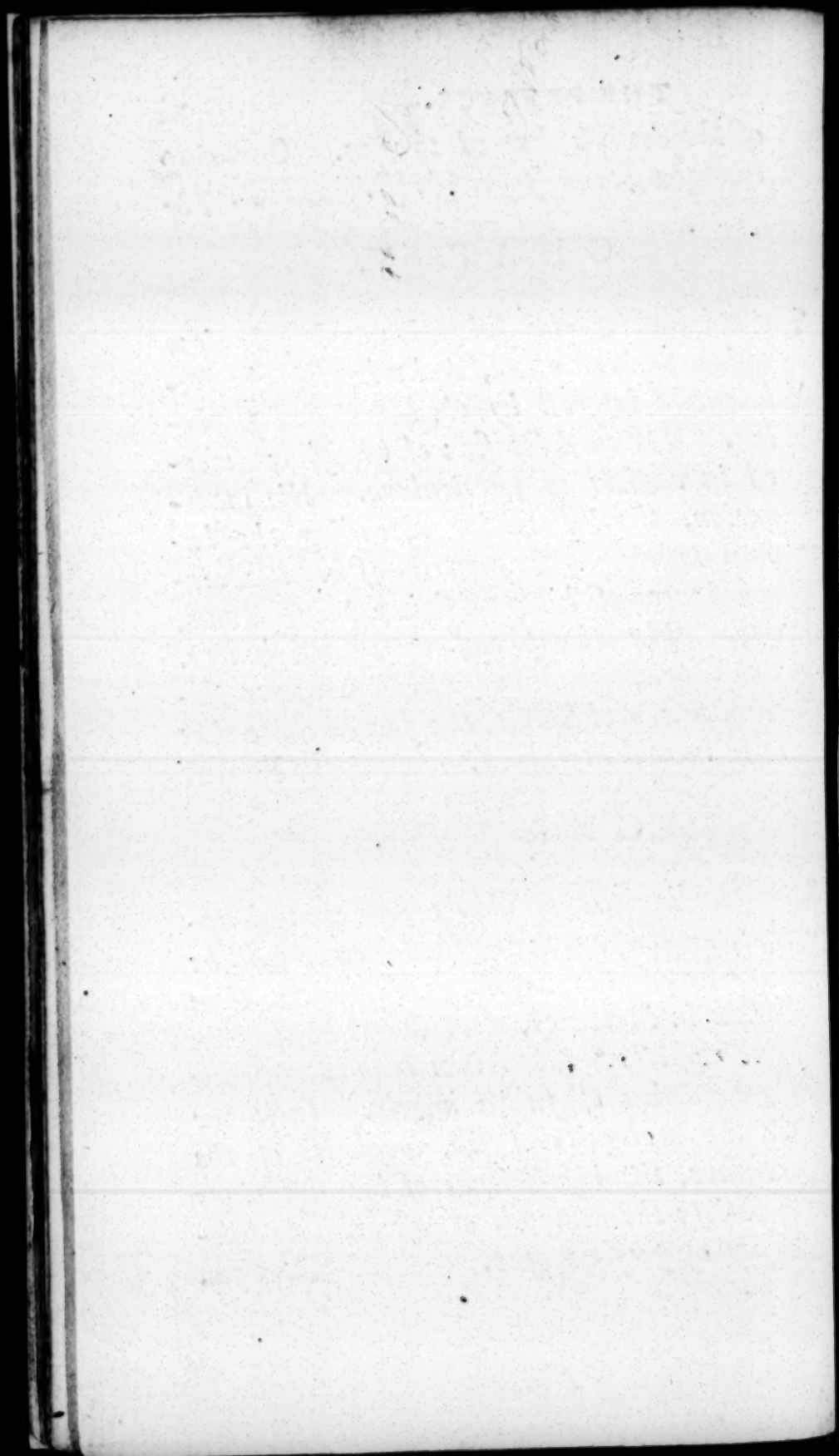
*of the devil's hatred to man. Our deep
engagements to Jesus Christ. P. 73.*

CHAP. V.

*The original of our salvation. Man's duty
to honour his nature, and advance the Re-
deemer's interest by obedience and suffer-
ing. The condescension of Christ consider-
ed in variety of particulars. His incar-
nation, the infirmities attending the hu-
man nature. The sorrows of his life, cir-
cumstances of his crucifixion, pain, shame,
&c. The triumphs of mercy and justice.
The supremacy of our affection due to Fa-
ther, Son, and Spirit, the sacred three that
bear record in heaven. P. 92.*

CHAP. VI.

*Some peculiarities of God's love in redemp-
tion, considered, viz. That man should be
more loved than angels, good and bad, than
Adam in innocency, than Christ himself in
some respects. Directions how to improve
the condition of fallen angels. In it we
see the malignity of sin, weakness of the
creature, the insufficiency of his sufferings
to satisfy the demands of justice. The ne-
cessity of perseverance. P. 154.*



THE
W O N D E R S
O F
R E D E E M I N G L O V E.

C H A P. I.

Introduction. The text explained. The redemption of fallen man, and rejection of fallen angels very astonishing. Reasons of the wonder. Adam's sin in effect the same with that of angels, Both very early in the transgression. The malignity and aggravations of Adam's sin. God's positive law, the test of Man's obedience. God's grant and speech to Adam. Adam's reply. God no gainer by man's redemption. Man inferior to angels before and after the fall.

THAT so many angels should leave their own habitation, and be reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, and that man who forsook Paradise should be readmitted into the favour of God, is a most astonishing act of providence, "For verily he took not on
A him

him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham," Heb. ii. 16. "For he taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham he taketh hold." Where we may observe three things.

I. The undertaker of man's redemption. He, i. e. Jesus Christ in both natures. 'Twas necessary, he should be man that he might die, and satisfaction be for made sin in the nature that offended. The text favours this sense, by excluding fallen angels from grace, because he did not assume their nature.

As he was the Son, he was only God; as Mediator, God and man: his being a Son, is in order of nature before his being a Mediator. Now, it was necessary he should be God, to bear him up under the burden of his sufferings, and to render them meritorious for us. None but Christ could offer a sacrifice as valuable as the offence was provoking. No mere creature had strength enough to bear our sins, nor dignity enough to satisfy for them.

II. Limitation of it. It was for us He did not take upon him the nature of angels

gels, nor offer any satisfaction for their offence ; but he took on him the seed of Abraham, that is, the human nature abstracted from sin, but not entirely separated from those infirmities that are purely animal, such as hunger, thirst, weariness, &c.

Why the seed of Abraham? For three reasons. This is mentioned,

1. Because the promise of the Messias was made to the Jews, who were the natural seed of Abraham. To them the divine oracles, which contained the promise of life, were committed.

2. To comfort the believing Hebrews in their dispersion. Their steady adherence to christianity, having raised a violent storm against them, the apostle in the text cheers up their sinking hopes with this, *viz.* That Christ took on him the seed of Abraham, whose children they were.

3. Because in Abraham's seed all nations were to be blessed. It was typical, shadowing out all future believers in the world, who, in God's account, are the spiritual seed of Abraham.

III. The manner how. When we lay trembling over the dismal gulf, into which

which the angels had already fallen, our dear redeemer stretched out his arms and delivered us from going down to that bottomless pit; there they lie in their chains, while he knocks off our fetters, and by his own death ransoms our souls from bondage.

THE PROPOSITION.

That the Redeemer's love in regarding fallen man, and not fallen angels, is very astonishing.

THIS discriminating instance of grace is the wonder of heaven and earth, and will be the admiration of eternal ages. Astonishing providence! fallen angels are fallen into hell; fallen man, who deserved to be there also, is restored to favour and raised to heaven.

METHOD.

I. What reason there might be to expect that fallen man should be forsaken as well as fallen angels?

II. What reason may be supposed it was not so?

III. What use to be made of this?

First, What reason there might be to expect that fallen man should be forsaken as well as fallen angels?

ALL the reason in the world, if we consider,

I. Their

1. Their sin was the same.

2. That God is no gainer by man's redemption.

3. That he is inferior to angels, after their fall, as well as before.

I. Adam's sin, in effect, was the same with that of angels, and consequently deserved the same treatment.

To give this its due weight, we'll briefly consider his first sin, with its Malignity and aggravations.

1. As to Adam's first sin.

For substance it was the same with that of angels. They both transgressed the same law, and both were very early in the transgression.

The particular sin of Adam consisted in eating, in eating the forbidden fruit, not for need, but for wantonness and curiosity. It is true, God had given Adam an appetite, whereby he was capable of desiring so agreeable a fruit; but to bar the unlawful excursions of that appetite, He did not only prohibit the tree, but enforced the prohibition by a threatening of death. And what more proper to guard him against temptation, than such a strict command, spirited with so terrible a penalty? Thus we see how

SELF-DENIAL was a duty enjoined in
A 3 Paradise

Paradise, and the first sin was self-pleasing, i. e. man's doing his own will in contradiction to the will of God, or eating of that tree which God had expressly prohibited.

Now, though the angels did not sin by eating the forbidden fruit, yet they sinned by doing what God had forbidden. Adam's sin was a transgression of the law of nature, as well as of a positive institution. Sin is a relative term, and supposes a rule or law, of which it is a breach. And though that particular law which they transgressed be not revealed, it must be a positive one, or that of nature. If the law of nature, it is the same with the moral law violated by Adam, so far as it agrees with their spiritual nature, and requires divine worship, and other duties resulting from the relation of creatures to God, called by some, Covenant of Works, under which Christ, the second Adam, was born, and under which the standing angels enjoy their present felicity, And supposing it to be a positive law, they could not violate that, without transgressing the law of nature.

Now, though man was in the same transgression with angels, and by consequence deserved the same punishment, yet

yet man is spared, and fallen angels are left under irretrievable misery. Lord! What was there more in the guilt of angels than in the sin of man, that thou wouldst never vouchsafe to cast one favourable smile upon them?

ADAM and angels were very early in the transgression. Did the angels sin immediately after their creation? so did Adam; he commenced rebel as soon as he had a being; his reign in Paradise was very short, for according to the opinion of some learned men, he fell on the same day that he was made, alledging for proof, Psal. xlix. 12. "Man being in honour abideth not, or, Adam being in honour lodged not one night," (so the Hebrew) i. e. upon the bed of honour in Paradise. This sense seems to be favoured by John viii. 44. "The devil was a murderer from the beginning," i. e. from the days of the creation. From the beginning was the common phrase whereby the Jews expressed the days of creation. Hence it is, that they called the works of creation, the works in the beginning. So that if he fell within the days of creation, he fell on the day that he was made.

THE

THE probability of this will further appear from their speech, which seems to insinuate as if no fruit had been eaten before. Besides, if Adam had continued any time without sin, it is likely he had begot Cain his first born without sin. But that which seems most considerable is, That the redemption of the world was to be declared instantly upon the creation; since the second Adam was to repair the ruins of the first, it was fit he should be proclaimed King and Saviour, even the first day of man, that he might be set up, Lord of all men, from the first day of man's appearance in the world.

ADD to these, the seeming correspondence there is between the fall and redemption: it is certain our redemption was wrought on the sixth day of the week, the day (as 'tis supposed) Adam fell: probably he took the forbidden fruit about noon, which is the time of eating, and it was about that hour Christ was nailed to the cross. About three in the afternoon our Lord died, and it is conjectured that about that very time the promise of a saviour was made to Adam.

IF he fell on the sixth day, then it will follow, in consequence of the foregoing conjecture

conjecture, that sin entered into the world, and Christ was promised before the seventh day came, and thus God created a new creation, before he rested on the sabbath-day, as having wrought a new world of grace; which was a greater work than the creation of nature; so that the institution of the sabbath was partly moral and partly evangelical. Before the fall Adam was obliged to keep it by the law of nature, and after by a positive injunction.

THE work of that day was to praise God for creating the world, especially for the promise of a redeemer, by whom it was to be restored; therefore the Jews were wont to say of the sabbath, that it was a Mediator. The title of Psal. xcii. is, A Psalm of the Sabbath, which the Chaldee translator renders thus, "A psalm or song which Adam the first man sung concerning the sabbath-day," And upon Cant. i. he speaks yet more plainly, viz. "When Adam saw that his sin was pardoned, when the sabbath came he sung a psalm, as it is said, a psalm or song for the sabbath-day." Lightfoot--- Besides no sooner is Christ promised, but the earth is cursed, that none might look for blessedness on earth but

but in Christ, whose kingdom is not of this world.

2. The malignity of Adam's sin. A total apostacy from God.

It was of a very heinous nature ; an attempt to dethrone God, and to usurp his prerogative ; a conspiracy with devils against heaven, the greatest presumption that a creature could be guilty of. It was a voluminous and complicated sin, being a breach of all the commandments. It was a wilful venturing upon that death that God had threatened, and by that one sin, he murdered all his posterity before they were born. And what greater malignity could there be in the sins of angels? Not very much, before, if any at all.

Were the angels guilty of unbelief?

So was Adam, in hearkening to the tempter more than to his faithful Creator. This unbelief, or not believing God's word, seems to be his first sin, I mean, his not believing the reality of God's intention in the command and threatening.

Were the angels guilty of pride? Yes, 1 Tim. iii. 6: " Lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the devil," that is, into the sin of pride.

which

which turned angels into devils. They forfeited all their comforts by aspiring after greater heights of glory.

AND were not our first parents equally criminal in this respect? No sooner made out of nothing, but they aspire to be as Gods, i. e. independent and absolute. Poor worms! just crept out of dust, yet presumptuously affect an equality with their Almighty Maker. Strange! that Adam of so mean an original, should so soon forget himself. Infinite audacity! He was not content to be Lord of the earth and seas, but acts the competitor with the God of heaven for universal dominion.

“Ye shall be as Gods,” said the tempter, and poor Adam and Eve had the vanity to believe they should be so indeed; and with that very expectation eat the forbidden fruit. God made them like himself, holy and happy; but they would be like the most High, without bounds or limitation: they rivaled him in his omniscience, concluding that an equality in knowledge, did infer an equality in every thing else. But this presumptuous man is restored, and the angels who could not be guilty of greater presumption, are left in their miserable state.

Were

Were the angels guilty of ingratitude, that epitome of all sin? So was Adam, in tasting the only tree God had forbidden. He sinned in the midst of Paradise, which was a heaven upon earth.

Were the angels guilty of discontent? Yes, therefore it is said, "They left their own habitation," which they had not done, without entertaining a project of improving their happiness, Jude 6. And what shall we say of Adam? Can he be said to be pleased with his condition, who sought out new inventions to better it? yet treasures of mercy are stored up for rebellious man, and the revolted angels are left under the curse of the law.

MAN is not only admitted to a probationary state, but solicited by the most melting intreaties, to accept of pardon and peace, 2 Cor. v. 20, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us." Inexpressible condescension! What Lord, thou stoop, thou kneel down entreating sinful men to return to their duty, and not breathe out one kind invitation to fallen angels? O what shall I render?

Did angels slight the authority of God? So did Adam. He trampled upon the divine commands and threatenings,
which

which was in effect to despise God in his heart, as if he had been unworthy of his regards.

It was a most daring insult upon infinite Majesty, hence it is, his sin is more particularly styled, disobedience, Rom. v. 19. for in mere eating of the fruit there was no moral evil in the act itself, but it was a contradiction to a positive command of God; and by disobedience to it he disowned his right of commanding, or reserving any thing from the creature to his own use.

Why did God make a positive law the test of man's obedience in Paradise? Why was he not tried in some greater thing?

Ans. The scripture does not account for the nature of that tree, nor for the peculiar reasons that moved God to forbid the use of it. However, we may go so far as to observe, that there seems to be a greater appearance of wisdom in making this trying law positive, than if it had been moral; for, if the prohibition before the fall had been grounded on any moral evil, that is, on what was intrinsically evil in the nature of the thing itself, there had not been so clear an evidence of God's sovereign dominion, nor of Adam's subjection to it. Man's original

ginal nature was holy, and so agreeable to the great commands of the law, that they were not so meet to try a voluntary obedience, and therefore God was pleased to make a free positive law, which is suitable to his own dominion, and to the trial of man's voluntary subjection.

Now, when that which in itself was indifferent became unlawful merely by the will of God, and when that command had no other excellency but to declare the authority of God, this was a confining man's liberty, setting a badge of dependence upon him ; and in such a case to abstain was pure obedience.

THERE was no more hurt in itself for Adam to have eaten of that, than of any other tree in the garden ; but God to shew the right and power he had over his own goods, and his authority over man, his servant, reserves to himself what he pleased of his own creation, which was only one tree. But even in this, Adam disputes his authority, and would not allow him to be Lord over that one tree in the garden.

O the patience of God in bearing with such an aspiring competitor ! Lord, why didst not thou break him with a rod
of

of iron, and dash the rebel in pieces like a potter's vessel! Shall a proud worm thus contend with his God and live?

3. We'll now proceed to the aggravation of Adam's sin. Nothing can be charged upon fallen angels, of which fallen man was not in some measure guilty; though the offence seemed small yet the disobedience of our first parents was infinitely great, and aggravated in that they sinned unprovoked, against instances of great light and love, and against an easy command.

Did the angels sin freely without any constraint? So did our first parents, without any kind of pretence; they were not forced into the rebellion by a superior arm, or necessitated to fall by any decree, or by any imperfection in their original state. They were created upright, with wisdom, which is the rectitude of the mind, and purity, which is the rectitude of the will and affections, Eccl. vii. 9.

What then was the cause of Adam's fall? his own will.

In our first parents there was a natural principal of free will unto good, but mutable, so that as they might have used it to good, so they might abuse it to evil.

ginal nature was holy, and so agreeable to the great commands of the law, that they were not so meet to try a voluntary obedience, and therefore God was pleased to make a free positive law, which is suitable to his own dominion, and to the trial of man's voluntary subjection.

Now, when that which in itself was indifferent became unlawful merely by the will of God, and when that command had no other excellency but to declare the authority of God, this was a confining man's liberty, setting a badge of dependence upon him ; and in such a case to abstain was pure obedience.

THERE was no more hurt in itself for Adam to have eaten of that, than of any other tree in the garden ; but God to shew the right and power he had over his own goods, and his authority over man, his servant, reserves to himself what he pleased of his own creation, which was only one tree. But even in this, Adam disputes his authority, and would not allow him to be Lord over that one tree in the garden.

O the patience of God in bearing with such an aspiring competitor ! Lord, why didst not thou break him with a rod of

of iron, and dash the rebel in pieces like a potter's vessel! Shall a proud worm thus contend with his God and live?

3. We'll now proceed to the aggravation of Adam's sin. Nothing can be charged upon fallen angels, of which fallen man was not in some measure guilty: though the offence seemed small yet the disobedience of our first parents was infinitely great, and aggravated in that they sinned unprovoked, against instances of great light and love, and against an easy command.

Did the angels sin freely without any constraint? So did our first parents, without any kind of pretence; they were not forced into the rebellion by a superior arm, or necessitated to fall by any decree, or by any imperfection in their original state. They were created upright, with wisdom, which is the rectitude of the mind, and purity, which is the rectitude of the will and affections, Eccl. vii. 9.

What then was the cause of Adam's fall? his own will.

In our first parents there was a natural principal of free will unto good, but mutable, so that as they might have used it to good, so they might abuse it to evil.

It is God's prerogative to be unchangeable, and none but God can be naturally free from change. Mutability is essential to a creature, as such. Of which in the application.

ADAM could have stood, when he fell, without any more grace than that which he then abused. He had a power in his will to reject the temptation, as well as to comply with it. His fall therefore was voluntary, from the free choice of his own mutable and self-determining will. God took no power from him before he transgressed, nor suffered him to be assaulted with a temptation that he could not resist; so that he fell, not because he could not stand, but because he would not. While satan was representing to them the advantages of eating that fruit, so intent were their minds upon being Gods, that all other thoughts were swallowed up in this. Inadvertency, a non-attention to what God said, brought ruin upon them, which they might have prevented by a believing consideration of what God had commanded and threatened. Had they actually set before their eyes the threatening of death, and considered the import of that terrible sentence, and that God was obliged

in honour and justice to execute it upon the transgressor, they had conquered the tempter.

AND was not this plainly despising the law, and calling in question the truth and power of the legislator, as if he would not, or could not call them to an account? And what could rebel angels do more? What greater malignity in their essence, that shall never be pardoned.

DID angels sin against light? So did our first parents. The woman owns the tree was forbidden: yea, not so much as to be touched (which carries the matter further than God did, for he only said, "Thou shalt not eat of it," Gen. ii. 17.) and yet she presumes to eat, which made her a wilful transgressor. Thus she turns knowledge into rebellion.

DID the angels sin against instances of peculiar goodness? So did our first parents, whose original state was glorious and happy.

GOD'S Grant and Speech to Adam.

I have made thee after my own image, and this world, with all its rich furniture, for thy sake, I have constituted thee

heir and lord of the earth ; have dominion over the fishes of the sea, Fowls of the air, and beasts of the field. For the seat of thy empire I have given thee Paradise, a situation that for beauties and glories is a model of heaven, my own palace ; enriched with an infinite variety of pleasing objects. The flowers of the spring and the fruits of the autumn striving to make thy life most delightful : the air shall be always serene, the earth fertile, trees fruitful, and the heavens yield nothing but what is fragrant and salutary.

Sensitive pleasures are thine to refresh thee in their native purity ; in my smiles thou shalt daily taste of the more refined delights of heaven, the element of angels.

Among other excellencies I have provided on purpose a tree of life to perpetuate thy happy being. Lo, I give thee all things that is within the compass of this world, but one single tree, which if thou eat, in dying thou shalt die. I am the Lord.

ADAM'S Reply..

Lord I adore ! When my eyes were first opened, they sparkled with joy, and
my

my mind was filled with a pleasing horror. Amazed! when I saw thy works of wonder, and myself (who but an hour ago was a lump of earth) now animated with the breath of life, and made the happy spectator of thy works.

LORD! admiration makes me silent, and the greater it is, the less power I have to speak. The gifts of thy goodness equally astonish and confound me. What, Lord, created after thy likeness and made governor over the works of thy hands! a sacred horror and confusion overwhelms me. To attempt thy just praise, is an impossibility, to do it in the sublimest manner, would but lessen the wonders of thy grace to me, which indeed are incomprehensible.

WHAT Seraph, what language is there (though God himself should form it) that can truly and adequately praise so great, so kind a being and benefactor? Lord, how shall I praise thy name, since there is none can do it so as not to diminish rather than magnify thy grandeur, and the acts of thy transcendent goodness. I tremble with gladness and joy, my heart is hot within me, while I muse the fire burns; but O I want words----

He

He that pretends to praise thee worthily, either does not know thee, or is not worthy of that knowledge. To tell thee, O Lord, that thou art infinitely greater than all the world, is to say nothing, and yet is the greatest praise my tongue can give, and the least thy majesty can receive. Whatever efforts my imagination should make to conceive suitable words, I shall never be able to find out any capable of expressing the great things thou hast done for me; yea, though I should offer thee a sacrifice of myself, I should offer nothing but what is thine already, because I have nothing but what I have received from thy bounty. Behold, I give thee myself, who have the honour to be thy image, and what can I present that is greater than the resemblance of thyself? Not to love, not to esteem, not to praise, not to obey, would be no loss unto thee, but would be my infelicity, my ruin, who, Lord, am thy creature, and thy servant-----

Thus sensibly affected we may suppose Adam to be upon his first view of this world. But O how soon did the impression wear off! How soon did he overlook the blessings of creation! How soon
did

did he conspire against his great benefactor, and break out into open rebellion against him, even in the midst of Paradise.

AND what did the angels more? yet they are punished with the utmost severity for their abuse of divine bounty: the fury of an incensed God flames out against them for ever and ever. Lord, what have they done more than we, that thou wilt never smile upon them? Why are they doomed to torments that are extreme and eternal, and not we, who have equally despised the same goodness?

AGAIN, Did the angels sin against an easy command? So did Adam. The obedience required of him was not above his power. What more easy than to abstain from one tree, when he had the free and full use of all other trees? The precept being negative, lessened the difficulty; for prohibitions are easier than precepts, i. e. it is easier to forbear than to do: "Thou shalt not eat," cannot be supposed to be a difficult precept.

HE was forbidden no great thing, only to forbear the fruit of one tree, a tree he could very well spare, being perfectly happy without it. Nay farther, the fruit of that tree was poison, it was immediate death.

death. One would think there would be no great difficulty to abstain from such a forbidden object.

THUS we see the command was rather below than above his strength, and the sanction of it was more apt to restrain from the breach of it, than encourage any attempts against it: the smaller the matter was, the more easy was the obedience, and the more unreasonable the sin. Adam had greater arguments to forbear than to eat; his all was secured by the one, his ruin ascertained by the other.

It is true, man had a tempter, which the angels had not, but he wanted no ability to resist the efforts of the strongest temptation. Satan with all his legions could not compel his will by any physical efficiency; this he knew, therefore managed the design by moral arguments; so that conquest over man in paradise was not by force, but subtilty.

How inexcusable then were our first parents, who, though able to maintain their ground, for want of a due strict attention to what God said, tamely suffered themselves to be made captives in the garden of liberty? And yet God enters into a treaty of reconciliation with man,
and

and the angels are left under blackness of darkness for ever. Shall not this grace kindle in my heart a most ardent flame of love to the great redeemer, who rescued me from that bitterness of death which is the eternal portion of apostate angels.

DID not man deserve death as well as angels? Were not we in the same condemnation, having, in effect, equally sinned, and come short of the glory of God? Was redeeming grace due more to one than to the other? By no means. The law made no distinction in the case, but awarded the same punishment against all its transgressors; the same vengeance, therefore, was due to man and angels, yet they are left in their chains, left without the least hope of returning to their ancient habitation; while man is pitied under his ruins, the prison doors thrown open, and the criminal not only set at liberty, but pardoned and preferred.

GOD might have insisted upon the forfeiture Adam made by his rebellion, and executed the terrible sentence in all the parts of it. Wonderful grace! that he did not immediately prosecute us as he did them, according to the outmost rigor of the law we had violated. Are not sinful

ful men as fit objects of eternal wrath as sinful angels? And are not miserable angels as proper objects of compassion as miserable man? Yes they were; and yet they are left, and we are restored. Lord, how is it we participate of thy favour, when we were as unqualified for it as they were? Why are we under thy smiles and they under thy frowns, though no greater sinners than ourselves?

II. The redemption of man is wonderful, if we consider, God is no gainer by it?

GOD is a being of absolute perfections, was perfectly happy in that eternal duration, when there was no creature to give him external honour. When he created the world, it was not to enrich himself, but to impart a being and happiness to his intelligent creatures; and if all these were destroyed, it would by no means affect the honour of God, who is infinitely blessed in himself. His original felicity is equally incapable of accession as diminution. What then, O Lord, moved thee to redeem man, to make so worthless a purchase? If thou wouldst display the riches of thy grace to rebels, why not to rebel angels as well

as

as man? What advantage could he propose to himself by the redemption of so worthless a creature as man? "Can a man be profitable to his God? Is it any gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect?" Job xxii. 2, 3. If man in innocency could not add to the riches of his glory, much less can we. Can our goodness extend to him, whose infinite glory is not capable of the least augmentation? A small candle adds more light to the sun in its meridian lustre, than all angels and men can do to the essential honour of God. He needs not our services to enhance his native dignity, or render the splendor of his nature and empire more illustrious. Those works that discover his eternal power and Godhead don't make him more happy, nor would it be any infringement of his happiness, if the whole creation were reduced to its primitive nothing.

III. Our recovery is further wonderful, if we consider, man was inferior to angels, both before and after their fall.

If any must be redeemed, why not the race of heaven? Why not the most excellent? if any must be rejected, why not man the scum and filth of the earth?

C

I. Man

1. Man was created lower than the angels.

ADAM was a glorious creature, but angels surpassed him in glory, and had the pre eminence every way ; they were the first-born of heaven, and eldest offspring of created goodness, dignified in the properties of their nature above mankind ; yet these elder sons of glory and original heirs of heaven, are disfranchised and disinherited for ever, and an upstart race of worms, polluted worms of the earth, are preferred unto their place.

THE creation is a magnificent structure, and angels are the most noble parts of it, pure and perfect spirits, not composed of, or burdened with gross matter as we are, they belong to that class of created beings that are esteemed the most bright and honourable, and make the nearest approach to God, yet are forsaken of God ; and what is most dreadful, are under an impossibility of salvation ; while man, their inferior, man that is only an enlivened clod of earth, is refined and made meet for the inheritance above.

ANGELS were the purest productions of love, every way superior to man, who at his best estate is vanity, universal vanity ;

nity ; so the Hebrew. They shined like stars in the firmament of heaven, we crawled as worms on the earth ; but their superior excellency stands them in no stead ; when they fell, mercy did not interpose, no not one moment on their behalf ; flames of unquenchable wrath immediately seized upon them.

WHEN they offended, God ascends his tribunal, and in his hot displeasure pronounces the sentence of, “ Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his rebel angels.” You shall never return to your forsaken mansions, the light of my countenance shall no more shine upon you ; let weeping, wailing, and all the ghastly train of despair prey upon your hearts for ever. Behold I sentence you to the dark prison of justice, there to remain for ever, incapable of mercy. Let your chains increase, I consign you over to the furious reflections of your own mind, and may you never find any other comfort than what flows from despair, and sting of your enraged conscience. May nothing of life remain, but what may always serve to give you a sense of misery. May your dark and dismal night never see a morning. Let a painful af.

flictive eternity be your plague and your only portion.

2. Man after the fall is in some respects inferior to angels. They were not more deformed or defiled by their apostacy than we were; to this day they excel in strength, and retain greater degrees of natural perfections than any mortal can pretend to: when man fell, his sin did not only deprive him of his purity, but introduced a scene of universal ignorance and weakness: there is not a man by nature, understands God, or knows how to seek him aright, Psal. xiv. 2. Our understanding is as a land of darkness: nations most esteemed for natural knowledge, how blind in the things of God?

THE Egyptians who were men noted for knowledge, and deriving the science to remote nations, how ignorant when they worshipped crocodiles, cats, and insects, and paid a religious respect to leeks and onions. Greece was counted the eye of the world, and Athens the eye of Greece, yet those learned Greeks were so far from acquaintance with the true God, that they adored thirty thousand gods, and some of them known murderers; and had three hundred twenty

ty four opinions about the chief good. The Romans who excelled in politeness and conduct were not much behind them, when they worshipped a sever and dignified a strumpet with the title of the Goddess of Flowers.

Now, there is nothing of this ignorance among the fallen angels, they retain their knowledge and native strength, and in that respect are not only superior to us, but more capable of serving the Redeemer, if he had recovered them. Yet not one fallen angel pardoned.

The eminency of their nature, by which they exceed us in knowledge and power, seems to render them more agreeable objects of redemption, because it would make them more capable of answering the end of so great a mercy. But all merciful regards are confined to man, the lame, the halt and blind part of the intellectual world.

“ Not one devil pitied, not one apostate spirit recovered, not one of those
“ once eminent creatures restored. Every one of them has only a prospect of
“ misery, without any glimpse of recovery. They are eternally ruined under
“ one sin, and we repaid under many
“ provocations.”

Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man that thou makest account of him above angels! How comes the day spring from on high to visit us, and not them? Lord, what have they done more than man, that thou wilt never turn their darkness into a cheerful day? Why, O Lord didst thou discharge thy utmost fury upon them, and not upon us their associates in rebellion? Why did thy terrible thunder dash them and not us, into the lowest hell? Why were not those dignified spirits spared, as well as contemptible man? Why was not he punished for ever, as well as those unhappy creatures?

Why, O Lord! Why didst thou give thy dear Son a sacrifice for us, and not for them; for them who were the offspring of heaven?

“Dearest Jesus! thou didst not breathe
 “one sigh, nor shed one drop of blood,
 “nor weep one tear, nor suffer one
 “stripe, nor preach one sermon for the
 “salvation of devils; thou art wholly
 “given for me.”

C H A P. II.

An inquiry into the reasons why man was not forsaken as well as angels. The sin of angels not greater than that of man. The recovery of man not a more honourable or more easy work. No greater attractives in mankind than angels. God no less kind to Adam before the fall than to angels. The cry of man's misery not greater than that of angels. Fallen angels no more able to recover themselves than fallen man. God under no greater obligation to man than to angels.

HAVING given some reasons why it might be expected that fallen man should be forsaken as well as fallen angels, I proceed to the next question, viz.

Secondly, What reason might be supposed, that man was not left under the same misery with fallen angels.

In order to illustrate this it will be necessary,

1. To

I. To inquire into the circumstances of fallen man and fallen angels, and see what can be pleaded more for one than the other.

II. Then shew the particular reasons that might move God to pass by fallen angels and redeem fallen man.

FIRST, I'll briefly inquire into the circumstances of both, and see what can be pleaded more for fallen man than for angels.

THEIR sin in effect was the same, and yet there is as much difference in their condition as between heaven and hell. Why did not impartial justice inflict equal punishment upon those who were equally criminal? I shall consider this under the following heads; where I shall be oblig'd to review some things that have been already discuss'd.

1. Was the sin of angels greater than that of man?

2. Was it a more honourable work to save man?

3. Was there any who interceded for fallen man more than for angels?

4. Was the redemption man of a more easy work?

5. Were

5. Were there greater attractives in man?

6. Was God less kind to Adam before the fall than to angels?

7. Was the cry of man's misery greater than angels?

8. Was man less able to help himself than angels?

9. Was God under greater obligation to man than angels?

1. Was the sin of angels greater than that of man?

If so, it might provoke God to forsake them, because it made them more obnoxious; but no such thing: and suppose it were greater, still the difficulty recurs, since the punishment is not inflicted in proportion to the different degrees of their sins; for man is exempted, allowing them to be the greater sinners, yet not so great as the difference in their treatment.

If we take a survey of Adam's sin, you'll find it to be a counterpart of the devil's rebellion, and the very map of hell: there was in it the highest ingratitude to his benefactor, the most daring affront to infinite majesty. He envied God the supremacy of his knowledge,
by

by attempting to know all things without reserve. The truth and justice of God that were engaged to execute the threatening, he slighted, and yet he is spared; divine clemency triumphs over all his numerous and mighty provocations; when fallen angels, for the same sins, are for ever excluded, from any share in the compassion of God.

ADAM turns traitor in Eden, God's presence-chamber on earth; it was there he conspired with degraded angels against God, who had just expelled them from heaven, for treason: with these he engages in that most unnatural war, which they had a little before commenced against their great Creator. How provoking was this conjunction with them? and yet patience bears, and infinite mercy relieves the perfidious rebel; the captivated angels are confined to the dungeon, and our captivated souls are set at liberty.

WE exceed them in the quality of their sin, for they never sinned against the blood of Jesus, as we have done: They never refused the offers of salvation as we have done: never resisted the spirit of God striving with them, as we have done. Yet are we so far from exceeding

ceeding them in the penalty that we are exempted from their sentence.

ADAM's attempt to be like unto God, seems a greater offence than theirs, because of the inferiority of his nature. Thus, pride in a beggar is more odious than in a prince. Yet all the angels that fell are irrecoverably lost, though when all things are considered, our first parents in their station, and according to their capacity, did as much to provoke God to be irreconcilable as they did.

2. Was it a more honourable work to save man than angels?

If so, it may lessen the wonder; but no such thing: for as the angels were beings by nature superior to man, so the glory of their restoration would have been more transcendent; and the more they surpassed us in dignity, the more capable they were of serving their redeemer's interest. But he who is no respecter of persons, looks upon them with disdain and detestation; they are cast down from the world of light, into dark and loathsome habitations for ever.

MAN being a compound of earth, what honour could God propose by the redemption of such a despicable creature? whereas,

whereas, angels being more noble in their original and essence, and having a nearer affinity to their creator, the recovery of them seemed to be a work more becoming the wisdom of heaven.

THE rescue of a king is more honourable than that of a beggar ; the fallen angels were as so many princes taken captives by the enemy ; man a vagrant, destitute of all attractives ; yet those illustrious seraphims are left in bondage, when a door of hope is opened to Adam and his beggarly race.

WHAT honour could God propose to himself in sending his Son to die for man, who was not only composed of the same matter with the beasts that perish, but had polluted that earth he was made of. Astonishing providence ! that God should concern himself only in the redemption of poor worms, when there were so many thousand angels who wanted his mercy. Strange ! that he should overlook those miserable (but once glorious) spirits, and cast his compassionate eyes upon such noisome dunghills, and worthless pieces of clay, as we were.

3. Was there any creature that interceded for fallen man more than for fallen angels ?

If so, some regard might be had to their mediation, but we find no such thing : when man fell, he had no friend on earth to solicit the favour of God for him.

ON the other hand ; for ought we know, the standing angels might put in a word for their fallen brethren, saying, Spare, Lord, and pity our once dear and delightful companions ! O let thy mercy rescue them from the rage of devouring fire ! O listen to their groans, and let thy bowels yern towards them ! What, shall angels, those works of eternal council, sink into irreparable ruin ? Were they created only to be eternally miserable ?

TAKE occasion, (might they add) O Almighty Maker, to pity their ruined state, and to magnify the riches of thy grace, in forgiving them. Thus, perhaps the holy angels might plead for them : but there was not one righteous man left to stand up as a mediator to plead in favour of his revolted brother.

BUT mercy pleaded for man, and so it might for fallen angels, whose miseries rendered them as proper objects of pity as any ; but the cry of mercy was only heard for man ; he is restored by the kind interposition of a mediator, though he

D

could

could lay no claim to the favour of God, more than the angels.

BUT justice pleadeth against angels; and so it did against fallen man, for both had rendered themselves obnoxious to the law. Now, what could justice urge against one, that might not equally serve against the other? Were the angels that fell rebels and traitors? so was man. Did angels provoke the anger of God? so did man.

LORD, (might justice plead) not to punish rebellious man is to encourage the rebel: if death be not executed upon him, how will satan triumph, since impunity would favour his argument for man's revolt? "Thou shalt surely die," is God's threatening, "Ye shall not surely die," is the devil's promise. Now, might justice argue, not to execute the threatened sentence, would be to justify the malicious tempter, and tempt the world to believe, that the father of lies was in the right, and the God of truth in the wrong. Better, O Lord, all the creation should perish, than thy unspotted truth be called in question, or the word of thy threatening be falsified, by not executing it: therefore says justice, manifest the varacity of thy nature, in the immediate infliction

of death upon the criminal, and so pour contempt upon satan, thy bold and contradicting adversary.

Now, what could mercy plead for guilty man, that justice could not say a thousand times more against him? True, indeed, he was an object of both. As miserable, he was an object of mercy, as criminal, of justice; but man being first criminal before he was miserable, he was the object of justice by his crime, before he was an object of mercy by his misery. O then how astonishing is the grace that makes the difference between us and fallen angels, Char. Vol. I.

4. Was the redemption of man a more easy work than that of angels? By no means.

WHAT redeemed us would have been a sufficient ransom for them? We cannot suppose their restoration would have cost him more than what he laid down for man, and perhaps not so much.

THE redemption of man is attended with a train of difficulties; in order to bring it about, God parts with his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, the dearest treasure of his love: Christ, he assumes our nature; nay, more, takes our sins

upon him, and gives his life a sacrifice for them; he heals our wounds by a medicine made of his own blood; and would not the death of the Son of God have been sufficient for the rescuing those miserable spirits, and to reinstate them in their former glory?

NAY, further, upon a supposition they were to be redeemed, it does not appear there was any necessity of doing it by the effusion of blood; their pardon might have been purchased without his being cloathed with obscure dust, or enduring the disgrace and pain of crucifixion. In restoring man, he suffered both in soul and body, but in suffering for angels, he had not been exposed to bodily pains, nor any of those trials that are peculiar to a state of humanity.

HE might have restored them without stooping to the meanest of an incarnate state, or coming upon the earth, that's under the curse of God; for ought we know, he might have restored them without relinquishing the supreme court, or at least the world of spirits. Let that be as it will, this is certain, that it would not cost God so much to destroy all the world, as to redeem one man; he might have spurned us into hell without the expence

penance of his Son's blood : was it not more easy to condemn the whole race of mankind, than expose the Son of his love to so bitter a death, 1 John iii. 1.

5. Were there greater attractives in fallen man than in fallen angels? Did God foresee any thing more inviting in him than in them, that he should restore the one and not the other? No such thing. Which will appear from a short view of their respective conditions.

Was not fallen man as corrupt as they? Yes, he was. And yet God makes a difference by grace, where he finds none by nature.

WHAT allurements in man, unless defilement might pass for attractives? Was not our enmity to him as great as our misery? When Adam fell, was there any good thing left in him that might plead for his readmission to God's favour? Were there any moral excellencies remaining to attract the smiles of God? No, not one.

OUR first parents having defaced the image of God, had nothing left in them but what was matter of just resentment, yet God confers his greatest favours on those who are unworthy of the least, and

readmits them into his family, who were unworthy to beg at his door. Nay, more, he makes them sit down at his table, though not worthy as dogs to creep under it to gather up the neglected crumbs.

But did not Adam lament his fall, confess his folly, and cry for pardon?

THIS does not appear, but on the contrary, his deportment had all the marks of a hardened heart, : instead of weeping over a lost Paradise, and censuring himself for his base revolt, he prefers a bill of indictment against his Maker. and charges him as accessory to his ruin ; “ The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me, and I did eat,” Gen. iii. 12. as if that which God designed for a help was intended for his destruction. He does not only charge his wife, but impeaches God himself, making his kindness to him as the occasion of his fall.

So the woman, instead of an ingenuous confession, thinks to acquit herself by accusing the serpent. Thus we see the apology they made for themselves, serves only to aggravate the grand apostacy ; yet the renewed provocations are connived at and the transgressors, who expected nothing but fiery indignation, were unexpected

pectedly revived with the promise of a Saviour. But more of this under head 7th.

BUT was not the behaviour of Adam's more immediate posterity more recommending? By no means, but on the contrary, they sunk into grosser enormities. Even Cain, the first born of Adam, proved the first born of hell, he that should have been the support of a ruined family, encreases its misery : instead of endeavouring to restore the lustre of his house, he sinks its glory deeper in the dust ; and when he should have been most solicitous to revive the spirits of his sorrowful parents, he adds to their affliction by murdering his innocent brother ; and wherefore slew he him? " Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

How universal was this corruption, contracting new guilt as they increased in number, till at last defacing the natural notions of the Deity, they turned the truth of God into a lie, making despicable creatures the objects of their adoration, though it be not so obvious when the world was first infected with idolatry.

SOME

SOME of the Jews date the original of idolatry from the time of Enos, which they thus describe, "the days of Enos, " the sons of Adam erred with great error : they said, for as much as God has " created these stars and spheres to govern the world, and set them on high, " and imparted honour unto them, it is " meet we should honour and magnify " them. Then they began to build " temples unto stars, and to offer sacrifices unto them, with words to glorify " them, and to worship before them." Ainsw. in Gen iv. 26.

So great were the impieties of those early times, that they provoked God to destroy the world by a mighty deluge, and those who survived that judgment, were so far from adhering to the true God, that they soon changed his " Glory into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, four footed beasts, and creeping things." I mean the posterity of Noah. About 350 years after the deluge, the religion planted by Noah was almost lost, and the earth became a scene of ignorance and idolatry, even in the beginning of Abram's days.

Now, what was there in the character of these successors of Adam that could recommend

commend them to God? Did they not grow more vile as they grew more numerous? The farther they went from Adam, the more remote they were from goodness, and yet this growing degeneracy could not divert the intentions of mercy from man: he alone is privileged with redemption.

LORD! why thus kind to man, and not to angels? Why have we an ocean of mercy, and they not so much as a drop of it? Lord! what was there more in their conspiracy than ours, that thou hidest thy face for ever from them? Were they without any recommending attractives? So were we. Did they deserve thy eternal displeasure? So did we. O the wonders of redeeming grace!

DID Christ foresee any better treatment from men than angels? No; for the world knew him not, when he appeared in our nature. "He came to his own, and his own received him not," but treated him as the enemy of mankind. They ridiculed his doctrine, slighted his message, and prosecuted him for imposture, blasphemy, and treason, though no guile was found in his mouth: and could the fallen angels have done more against him, if he had assumed their nature?

Lord!

Lord! how couldst thou bear to see thy dear Son thus insulted? Why didst thou not recall thy ambassador, and proclaim war against his enemies? Why didst not thou turn this lower world into the lowest hell, and make the earth a standing lake of unquenchable fire :

THO' he gave them undoubted proofs of his mediatorial design, yet they chose rather to continue in their enmity, than entertain him as reconciler. All things, but stupid man concurred in recognizing his almighty power and mission. Tempestuous storms and winds submitted to his rebukes. Inveterate distempers retired at the sound of his voice, yea, devils trembled and fled, when he spoke. Yet man, who alone was made capable of his salvation, denied the truth of his credentials, and opposed him with the same violence as they would have done, if he had come to destroy the world : tho' he proved the divinity of his commission by uncontestible miracles, so far were they from being convinced by them, that they pursued him with greater rage, and their malice never ceased till they imbrued their hands in his innocent blood.

WOULD

WOULD fallen angels have treated a saviour thus? had he taken their nature upon him, and visited their gloomy region, (granting the miserable captives there a state of trial) perhaps he had returned with richer spoils. How acceptable may we suppose, would a messenger of peace have been to damned spirits? How greedily would they have caught at the offer of salvation? How soon would those sons of darkness have been converted into stars of light? Can we think a messenger of peace would have met with such universal hatred, and ungrateful repulses from those distressed spirits? would they not rather have abandoned their prisons, and thrown down their weapons of rebellion, and thankfully accepted the tenders of grace?

HAD they but the least glimmering of hope now, with what importunity and ardour, may we imagine, would they address the Father of mercies? For they, who have been so many thousand years in pain and despair, would probably put a higher value upon the glad tidings, than eternal sinners, who have not actually felt the miseries of hell, and who will not be persuaded to repent, till they suffer by
 sad

fad experience in another world, what they would not believe here.

6. Was God less kind to Adam before the fall than to angels? If so, he might recompence that defect by a new instance of grace. But no such thing; as was proved before.

ANGELS and man were made after the same divine image, and were equally capable of all felicities. Not only made happy, but endued with a principle to perpetuate that happiness, if they pleased. Both rebelled, and both were banished, but they are left in their exiled state, and man is not only recalled from banishment, but elevated to a higher station than an earthly paradise. The holiness of Adam's nature qualified him for fellowship with his Maker, and by this spiritual converse he was refreshed with those delights that are the entertainment of holy angels.

PARADISE, the seat of Adam, God's representative upon earth, was an emblem of heaven, and the felicity of that primitive state was a resemblance of the heavenly. What could God do more for any creature than he did for our first parents? Paradise was a heaven upon earth,

earth, Adam and Eve were as the angels in heaven, rich in grace, yet they forsook their great benefactor upon a very slender temptation; and if Christ had not interposed, they had been involved in the same condemnation with fallen spirits.

7. Was the cry of man's misery greater than that of angels?

IF so, it might move the bowels of God, but it was quite otherwise: No sooner did they fall but a strange stupidity seized them; how sad and affecting were the miseries of their new condition, and yet how insensible were they! hardened in sin as soon as they commenced sinners.

IN the history of Adam's defection, we have not one word that was expressive of his sorrow. Did he blush for what he did? or cry out, Lord, have mercy upon a miserable sinner! Nothing less. Instead of going to God, he retires into obscurity, as if the shadow of a tree could screen him from the divine eye.

LORD! how soon did sin steel the brow, and make the heart incapable of relenting impressions! What, O fallen Adam!

E

dam!

dam! what, not one tear, not one sigh for the loss of Paradise, the loss of thy God, and of thy soul? What, O revolted woman! what hast thou done? Canst thou behold the ruin of thyself and dear husband, yea, and of all thy posterity, and not weep? See, O see how all thy children wallow in their blood, murdered by thee before they are born? What's become of thy native tenderness? How canst thou think of their misery, and not shed a tear over them? O astonishing stupidity! Unhappy Adam and Eve, who lost their reason with their innocence.

IT does not appear they applied themselves to God for relief, but, on the contrary, they attempt to hide themselves from him; foolish and infatuated creatures! What, seek for refuge from a tree that had been the instrument of their fall? Could they think any dark recess able to shelter them from the eye and anger of an all-seeing God? Thus, instead of confessing their sin, they aggravate it.

AND yet God pities hardened Adam, but leaves the fallen angels in their forlorn state. The case of Adam was sad, but he was not entirely forsaken, being reprimanded,

re
wa
fel
an
sup
wit
mig
the
F
wre
as p
his
indu
thing
ty,
dress
since
their
8.
than
If
comp
for b
of re
had
fetter
selves
not t
Tr
streng

reprived, before the promise of a saviour was made to him; but when the angels fell, they were immediately forsaken, and sentenced to hell; we may therefore suppose, they were more sensibly affected with their misery, and upon that account might petition God for some ease; and if they did it, it was in vain.

HAD our first parents deplored their wretched condition, and returned to God as penitents, before they were invited by his goodness, it might have been some inducement to divine pity: but no such thing, for God, who was the injured party, and whose right it was to punish, addressed himself first to them, and ever since is first in offering reconciliation to their posterity.

8. Was man less able to help himself than angels?

IF so, his impotency might excite the compassion of God, but it was otherwise, for both were under an equal incapacity of restoring themselves: the fallen angels had no more power to knock off their fetters, than they had to make themselves: it was in their power to fall, but not to rise again.

TRUE indeed, they surpass us in strength, but this contributes nothing to
E 2
their

their relief, for with all their strength they are not able to break open the prison doors, or remove the least chain wherein they are bound. The horrible gulf is too deep to get out, their guilt too great to be expiated by their own sufferings; are miserable, and cannot help themselves, being as unable to satisfy the justice of God, as they are to resist the torrent of his mighty wrath.

HAVE they any more power than fallen man to break their bands asunder, and force their passage through a sea of infinite vengeance? No, no. As the displeasure of an angry God is too heavy to be endured, so too fierce for a fallen creature to break through. Their natural strength, as spirits, is great, but too feeble to make the least resistance against God, and they too impure to make such satisfaction as may merit a deliverance.

THEIR present anguish is unsupportable, and when they view the great day, behold new scenes of sorrow open to them, a greater punishment being then prepared for them. This they believe, and tremble at the prospect, but with all their might and skill are not able to prevent, or divert that approaching storm.

IN this respect they are as impotent as man, and stand in equal need of assistance, yet they are forsaken of him, who only can relieve them: Those unhappy spirits cannot help themselves, and God is resolved to leave them in their helpless condition.

A sad case! to be extremely afflicted without any prospect of relief; to know there is a God that can help, a God that does actually relieve other miserable sinners, but will never reach out a helping hand to them; how cutting is such a thought! O it is this, it is this that irritates their passion, and redoubles their rage against God and man.

9. Was God under greater obligations to man than angels.

COULD man plead any greater desert than they? Had he been any ways more serviceable to God? No sure. We never did any thing whereby we might pretend to merit his favour. He was no more bound to redeem than he was to make us. If he had suffered all mankind to perish, he had done them no injustice. How easily could he have extirpated the race of Adam, and erected a new world

and replenished it with better inhabitants?

WE were as unworthy of pardon as the angels, our recovery is the effect of grace, and not of any obligation that God was under unto us more than unto them: if therefore, he had treated us according to our real merit, we had been in the same condemnation with them.

THE provocations of man were innumerable and daring, his inclinations to evil impetuous, and his aversion to goodness as invincible as that of fallen angels, yet he is pitied and succoured, and they are left in their sin and misery.

“ If divine goodness could not be
 “ obliged by the angelic dignity to repair
 “ that nature, he is further from any
 “ obligation to the meanness of man to
 “ repair the human nature. What could
 “ man do to oblige God to a restoration
 “ of him to the glory of his former state?
 “ Alas! we are so far from meriting re-
 “ deeming love, that by our daily trans-
 “ gressions we seem ambitious to put a
 “ stop to any further effusions of it.”

BUT you'll say, fallen man was his creature; and so were the fallen angels, and once as dear unto God as ever man was, but now they are his aversion, and
 fallen

fallen man his only favourite. How are they fallen and forsaken! doomed to the place of the damned, where showers of mighty vengeance incessantly fall upon them.

O miserable angels! What have you done more than man, that God would never vouchsafe to be reconciled to you? What greater malignity in your sin, that your pain must be eternal, and that none of your order must be saved. What, O righteous judge, moved thee to pity us and not them? Why hast thou erected a tribunal of justice for them and not for us; and a throne of grace for us and not for them? Which is the next thing to be considered.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

Some conjectures why fallen angels are not redeemed. All mankind fell in Adam, but all the angels did not fall, when some of them revolted. Adam had a tempter, which they had not. Angels sinned by their own proper will, whereas Adam's posterity sinned only by the will of their first parents. The Angels sinned against greater light, they moved in a higher orb. Were ringleaders in sin, and the first rebels. Refused subjection to Jesus Christ in our nature.

IN the next place, we shall consider the reasons, why it may be supposed; God rejected the fallen angels.

SECONDLY, What moved God to redeem fallen men, and not fallen angels?

BEFORE I proceed to the answer, it will not be amiss to take this caution, of not being rash in our inquiries and determinations about the reason of those providential

vidential acts that are unrevealed, and therefore unsearchable.

THE curiosity of our first parents met with a fatal check; and for us to be prying into the grounds of this mysterious providence, without a just and pious limitation of our thoughts, is to second their ambition, who affected to be equal in knowledge with God. Therefore shall confine myself to the sentiments of divines, who have trod in this path before me.

I. PERHAPS, fallen angels are left, and man restored; because, when Adam fell, the whole human nature fell in him, but when the angels fell, the angelic nature was not wholly corrupted, for many of them kept their first state.

THE angels were not all ruined, (when some fell) by an ambitious desire after sovereignty. Great numbers of them continued in their allegiance, and are confirmed in the possession of their original glory. By these he is still honoured in the world of spirits, and will be for ever.

DID some angels rebel? others held fast their integrity, giving glory to the God of heaven: so that the divine honour

hour was not totally eclipsed among angels, as it was among men.

FOR, all mankind fell in Adam their first father ; there was no righteous man left, no, not, one, to stand up for the honour of God in this lower world. By the fall of Adam, the whole species of mankind was utterly lost, and not one holy man remained on the earth to preserve and promote the sacred interest of religion : so that if fallen man, had not been restored, this world would have sunk into irreparable ruin, and God would have wholly lost the glory of one considerable branch of the creation,

2. IT is probable, God made no provision for the recovery of fallen angels, because, they sinned without any allurements from a tempter, whereas man fell by seduction and the persuasion of a subtle serpent.

To fall, as our first parents did, when overpowered by the force of a sly insinuation, does not look altogether so heinous, as to sin freely without any temptation at all, as the fallen angels did.

THEY had none to envy their happiness, or disturb them in the fruition of it ; they were not decoyed into the fatal

snare

snare by the stratagems and wiles of a superior spirit : they rebelled, when there were none to impose upon their understandings, and tempt them with a promise of being as Gods : and as they fell without any insinuating motion from a subtle adversary, so they are left without any relief from a saviour.

THE devil, as he was the first sinner, and by consequence the first unhappy spring of all evil ; so he sinned of himself, but man was beguiled by the serpent, and as he fell by the instigation and malice of satan, so he is restored by the merits of a redeemer. On the other hand, the angels sinned wilfully without a tempter, when there was no sinful creature to delude them into that black conspiracy and therefore they are left without a remedy.

3. EVERY angel that fell, sinned by his own proper will, whereas, Adam's posterity were not born when he fell, Rom. v. 12. " By one man sin entered into the world," i. e. Adam, who was the common father of mankind, and with whom the covenant was made.

THE holy angels were created distinctly and severally, without dependance upon

upon one another, as to their original; therefore, when some of them fell, the rest were not prejudiced by their fall. They don't increase, or multiply their species as men, for the angels that now are, were all created at first, and none of them miserable but those, who were personally and actually engaged in that grand rebellion.

BUT when Adam rebelled, his children were unborn; though he was constituted head of our nature, we did not actually concur with him in his transgression, because we were not then in being.

'TIS true, his sin may be interpreted as the act of the human nature, then existing only in himself and Eve, who were as whole mankind, yet their posterity were not immediately or personally consenting to Adam's sin; for they cannot be personally consenting, before they personally exist.

THE angels therefore are left, because they fell by their own consent; and mankind put into another state of trial, because they did not actually join in Adam's rebellion: the fountain, indeed, was corrupted in Adam, and the streams partake of the infection, so all sinned in him:

...
e
l.
ir
w
ne
re
at

il-
n-
ot
nf-
in

ted
men
who
bof
ally
an
they

be
nt
o
joie
eed
and
d i
ain

il-
n-
ot
nf-
in

ced
men
who
proof
ally
and
they

be
nt
e o
joi
ee
an
d i
am

like the treason of favourites at court, which gives a greater accent to the ingratitude.

By how much the angels were more high in glory, by so much was their fall more grievous and fatal. And man, by how much he was more frail by nature, was so much more capable of redemption. Others think the holy angels were not at first favoured with the beatifical vision, which being the final end of rational creatures, could not be attained by any ordinary work, but by some extraordinary act of grace.

“ THEIR knowledge was great ; they
 “ they saw things in their causes, effects,
 “ and all that belong to them, so that
 “ what they did was with so plenary a
 “ consent of will, that they never alter
 “ or repent. Whereas, man’s know-
 “ ledge is discursive ; he finds out one
 “ thing by another, and one thing after
 “ another, so that upon further consider-
 “ ation he oft repents of what he before
 “ did.” Pet. Lombard. Caley of eter-
 nity.

To this purpose is that distinction of a threefold will among the schoolmen, the will of God, that can neither turn or return, the will of man, that may both
 turn

turn and return ; i. e. alter both before and after election, or choice made. Now, between these two is the will of angels, that may turn, but not return, that is, may alter before it chuses, but not after the choice is made.

“ So that when they sinned, they did
 “ it with such a full consent of will, that
 “ they cannot alter or repent ; and hence
 “ it is, according to the jargon of the
 “ schools, that their sin becomes unpardonable ; whereas, man, who sinned
 “ with so full consent and eagerness of
 “ will, might after repent of what he did,
 “ and to become capable of pardoning
 “ mercy.” *ibid.*

THEIR first act of volition, or willing, was their whole capacity of a blisful or miserable eternity : they made their own sentence, when they made their first election or choice ; and having such excellent knowledge, and no weakness to prejudice and perplex their choice, what they first did, was not capable of repentance, because they had at first in their intuition and view, all which could afterwards bring them to repentance. Bishop Taylor's life of Christ.

WELL then, according to this hypothesis, the ground of their apostacy had

more of malice and envy in it, than error: they did not only envy God, the honour of his supremacy, but man, the honour of their administration; for it is highly probable, that man upon his creation was committed to their charge, and man being their interior, they might interpret their attendance upon him, as inconsistent with the dignity of their character. Of which hereafter.

5. IT is not unlikely the fallen angels are left, because they were the first sinners, and ringleaders of rebellion in the world. They were the first who inverted the divine order of the creation, and turned the grace of God into wantonness; the first that ever appeared in arms against the crown of heaven, that invaded the rights of God, and endeavoured to strip him of the glory of his perfections, the first, who essayed to postpone God to themselves, and to depose the Almighty by exalting their own will above his; they were the first who wilfully denied his sovereign authority, and despised his goodness; and the first who presumed to affront his purity by casting the filth of sin before his holy eye.

THEY

THEY were the first who vilified eternal wisdom, by setting up a new rule for the guide of their actions and measure of happiness; the first who disparaged the all sufficiency of God, by preferring an imaginary satisfaction in sin, before a real felicity in God.

THEY were the first who drew Adam and Eve into that horrible conspiracy against God. They were the original occasion of our unhappy fall, and, by consequence, of all the calamities that attend the human race in time and eternity.

IT is not therefore unbecoming the character of divine wisdom and justice to expose the ringleaders of that grand apostacy to everlasting contempt and servitude, that thereby he might more effectually secure future obedience from others, and for ever deter them from such another ambitious attempt.

To pardon the first introducers of sin, would have encouraged others to spurn against the law, and to rebel with hopes of impunity. An easy admission of the first rebels into the favour of God, would have been the way to put a slight upon his future threatenings, and render them feeble and ineffectual in their intended influence.

IT is common for earthly princes to treat ringleaders in rebellion with the utmost severity, making them public examples to terrify others: thus God the supreme king as an evidence of his highest displeasure against the first sin, made the guilty angels, monuments of his everlasting wrath.

6. PERHAPS their sin is unpardonable, because it was a refusal of subjection to Jesus Christ in our nature, when the design of his incarnation was first revealed in heaven, and how, that as man, he was to be the head of angels.

IT is said of the devil, that he "abode not in the truth," John viii. 44. i. e. in Christ, or in the truth of the gospel, wherein Christ is declared to be the head of angels and men; to which declaration the angels that fell refused to subscribe, as some suppose, who think it hard to conceive, that God should irrecoverably cast off any creature till he has rejected the help of a mediator.

AND they imagine it to be after this manner; viz. When God created the angels, he made known to them his purpose of confirming them in glory by his Son, who in time was to assume man's nature,
in

in which nature they were to be subject to him as their head ; but some of them disdainfully refusing to stoop to an inferior nature, were for their pride, doomed to endless misery.

THAT these fallen angels refused subjection to Christ, upon the first discovery made of his incarnation, seems to be favoured by Heb. i. 6. And again when he brings in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him.

THE adverb, again, they join with the words, bring in : this position and sense of the words is countenanced by the Greek, which runs thus : “ When he again introduces his first begotten into the world,”---or the orb of the earth, according to the Arabic. Again, intimating, that God had brought his Son into the world before, as an object of worship, by a particular revelation made of him to angels, as one, who, in the nature of man was to be elevated above them, and in whom the families of heaven and earth, were to be united as their common head. Eph. i. 10, 20, 21.---“ That he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth ; even in him

him whom God has set at his right hand, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion.

THUS, angels and men are comprehended under one head. Mr Lock paraphrases upon the text, " Until the coming of the due time of that dispensation, wherein he had predetermined to reduce all things both in heaven and earth, under one head in Christ." And then observes,

1. IT is plain in scripture, that Christ at first had the rule and supremacy over all. See Colos. i. 15, 17. Heb. i. 8.

2. THAT a principle angel, with great numbers of angels his followers, joining with him, revolted from this kingdom of God, and erected to themselves a kingdom of their own, in opposition to that of God, and had all the heathen world vassals of that their kingdom. Luke x. 17, 20. Luke iv. 5, 8. Mat. xii. 26, 30. John xii. 31. and xiv. 30. and xvi. 11. Eph. vi. 12. Col. i. 13. Rom. i. 18. Acts xxvi. 18, &c.

3. THAT Christ recovered this kingdom, and was reinstated in the supremacy and headship in the fulness of time--at his death and resurrection.

4. WHAT

4. **WHAT** was the state of his power and dominion from the defection of the angels, and setting up the kingdom of darkness, till his being reinstated in the fulness of time, there is little revealed in sacred scripture, as not so much pertaining to the recovery of men from their apostacy.---It is true, God gathered to himself a people, and set up a kingdom here on earth, which he maintained in the little nation of the Jews, till the setting up the kingdom of his Son, Acts i. 3. and ii. 36. which was to take place as God's only kingdom here on earth for the future. At the head of this, which is called the church, he sets Jesus Christ his Son, giving him also all power in heaven and earth.

“ **THIS** Exaltation, of his, is expressed
 “ (Phil. ii. 9, 10.) by all things in hea-
 “ ven and earth bowing the knee at his
 “ name ; which acknowledgment of his
 “ honour and power, was that, perhaps,
 “ which the proud angel that fell, refus-
 “ ing, thereupon rebelled.” *ibid.*

THE article that required submission to Christ, being proposed to all the angels by way of trial, and as a test of their obedience, multitudes complied therewith ; but other disdaining to be subject to an inferior

ferior nature, refused : chusing rather to delight in the subjection of others to them, than in their subjection to one in the nature of man.

“ THEY would not be ministring spirits to creatures of a meaner rank, nor approve of Christ’s advancement in the human nature above all principalities and powers, says the learned Charnock. This seems probable, adds he, if we consider how the devil sets himself chiefly against man, as having a particular, envy and enmity against him, because of the honour put on our nature, by its high dignity in the hypostatical union, which perhaps might be one main cause of his fall.”

HE adds, “ That the sin of angels seems to be a rejection of Christ, because of their constant opposition to him. The devils never opposed the notion of one supreme being with the same violence, as they have done that of the mediation of Christ, though they be bitterly bent against the whole Trinity, yet they seem to have a more particular spite against the second person, as if they had suffered more upon his account for some crime against him, than against any other of the most blessed
“ sed

“ sed persons in the Godhead ; nor is
 “ it unusual among men to have the
 “ greatest animosity against them, upon
 “ whose account they suffer.”

BESIDES, the peculiar sense and reflection the devil had upon himself at the appearance of Christ, seems to intimate as much, Mat. viii. 29. “ They (the devils) cried out, saying, what have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come to torment us before the time?” This seems to hint at their sin in their former slighting of him. “ What have we to do with thee?” is a speech of contempt and indignation, as if they could not endure the sight of that person, to whose government they denied subjection, and for which denial they had drawn upon them the implacable wrath of God.

THE very sight of Christ was terrible to devils ; it raised new horrors in their mind, as if they feared some signal judgment to be then inflicted upon them for former sins, which seems to import their original offence to be more particularly leveled against himself ; hence perhaps it is, that his very presence was tormenting to them, filling them with fresh expectations of superadded wrath, for refusing

fusing his dominion over them. Though this may differ from the common notion, yet it is not disagreeable to the analogy of faith.

BUT upon the whole, though God might upon these and other considerations, unknown to us, conclude them under an irrevocable doom, yet the principle cause that moved him to redeem man, was his most free and undeserved grace. That so many offending angels are left for ever, is owing to the justice of the supreme and sovereign Governor; and that any among the children of men are saved, must be entirely resolved into that love, which passeth all understanding.

'TIS not for us to intrench on the prerogative of heaven, by inquiring into the reasons of God's eternal purpose beyond the good pleasure of his will revealed in his word.

AFTER all our most critical disquisitions, we can ascribe the restoration of mankind, to nothing but the free unmerited grace of our almighty Creator and Redeemer. O the stupenduous goodness and severity of God! Goodness towards fallen men, severity towards fallen angels. How unsearchable are the acts both of mercy and judgment!

CHAP.

C H A P. IV;

The peculiar misery of unbelievers. The wonderful honour conferred on the human nature. The impossibility of salvation without the death of Christ. The grand reason of the devil's hatred to man. Our deep engagements to Jesus Christ.

THE next thing to be considered, is, how christians should improve this important article, that they may not receive the grace of redemption in vain.

FROM what has been said; these following things recommend themselves to our consideration. Observe then,

1. That unbelievers shall receive greater condemnation.

2. That Christ, by assuming our nature, has advanced it to the highest honour.

3. That there is no way to heaven but by Jesus Christ.

4. That our salvation by Christ is one great reason of satan's opposition to man.

G

5. This

5. This shews our great obligations to Jesus Christ.

I. Unbelievers shall receive the greater condemnation, because they refuse the provision made for their recovery.

FALLEN angels who forfeited the grace of creation, never refused the offers of salvation by a redeemer, (because never made to them) as the unbeliever does. By unbelievers, I don't mean such, who never had the means of faith, as the heathens, but those who are privileged with the means of grace, but don't come up to the requirements of the gospel, viz. faith, repentance, and universal purity.

SOME deny the revelations of the gospel, others doubt of them, and among those who give their assent to them, how few heartily close with the terms required? How few that have a sense of the need and worth of Christ? How few value his precepts so as to do them, his promises so as to rely upon them, or dread his threatening as the messengers of death?

THEY would be saved by the death of Christ, but will not regulate themselves by his life, postponing the commands of the gospel to the indulgencies of the flesh;
would

would have salvation but reject the yoke ; would gladly enter into life, but hate the narrow way that leads to it ; these are the unbelievers, for whom a double vengeance is reserved.

THAT there are degrees of punishment in the future state, I think is unquestionable from the nature of distributive justice, whereby God (rendering to every man according to his deeds,) proportions the punishment to the offence, Rom. ii. 6.

Now, though all sin be a transgression of the law, yet some sins being in their nature and circumstances more heinous than others, expose the transgressor to severer strokes. Heb. x. 29.

HENCE heathens shall have a cooler habitation in hell, than those who perish under the gospel: nor will it be strange if devils meet with a milder treatment there than sinful man, because they never sinned against so much grace. No blood was shed for the expiation of their sins, no mediator that we know of interceded for them, no offers of salvation were ever made to them: but we cannot say so, for God has not only given his dear Son to be a ransom for us, but invites us to return, yea, what is more, importunes us to be reconciled. Isa. li. 4. " Hear-

ken to me, O my people." 2 Cor. v. 10.
 " We are ambassadors for Christ, as tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

WHAT pathetic moving expressions are these? Though man be first in the breach of friendship, God is first in offering terms of peace. Lord, how is it thou art more concerned for us than we are for ourselves? How is it thou takest more care to prevent our ruin than satan does, as busy as he is to promote it? How tenderly does God lament our final rejection of grace. " O that my people had hearkened unto me," Psal. lxxxi. 13.

How then can we but expect a forer vengeance, if we neglect so great a salvation? A salvation that was never tendered to fallen angels. Where such distinguishing grace abounds, and is not received, nothing remains but a certain fearful looking for of forer judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the unbelieving adversaries, Heb. x. 27.

THE more rich the effusions of grace are, the greater the contempt of it, and, by consequence, the more terrible will be the judgment of such at last; for the vials of wrath will be in proportion to those
 streams

streams of goodness slighted by the sinner. If we perish under a dispensation of mercy, wherein God is willing to save us, ah, how unconceivably sad will our case be! With what fury will conscience lash the forsaken wretch, and say,

WHAT, die, and drop into hell in sight of an offered heaven? What, launch out into a sea of despair, from a land of hope? O wretched man, to make thyself miserable for ever and ever, when God was willing to make thee happy! The higher we advance in an hypocritical profession of christianity, the deeper we shall sink into the bottomless pit.

DOUBTLESS, God will severely punish fallen angels, who never had any offers of pardon made to them: but will he not appear with greater severity against those who neglect to procure pardon that may be had upon reasonable and easy terms? The first coming of our Lord was in a flame of love, but his last coming will be "in flames of fire, to take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord," 2 Thess. i. 8.

" THEN even mercy itself will vote
 " with the vindictive attributes of God,
 " for their forer punishment: and O
 " how inexpressible sore must that punish-

" ment be, that is pronounced by mer-
 " cy turned into fury? how sad must
 " their case be, when abused love shall
 " kindle such a flame in God's breast
 " that shall never be quenched, and roll
 " such a stone upon the mouth of hell
 " that can never be moved.

" May the devil say, ever since my
 " fall, I was maliciously set against God,
 " but alas! so soon as I ever first sinned,
 " God kicked me out of heaven, and
 " told me he would never have mercy
 " upon me; and though I saw sacrifices
 " offered, and Christ in the flesh, and
 " the gospel preached, yet how could
 " this but enrage me the more, to have
 " God as it were to say, Look here sa-
 " tan, I have provided a remedy for sin,
 " but none for thine." Lo I bring thy
 " captives to heaven, but thou shalt remain
 " in thy chains for ever. I have found a
 " ransom for man, but none for thee. I
 " declare myself thine implacable enemy.

" This, may the devil say, could not
 " but exasperate, and set me upon re-
 " venge against God, so far as I could
 " reach him." But alas! alas! had
 " Christ been but once offered to me,
 " might the devil say, what do you think
 " I would have done? Would such a mis-
 " ratle

nable creature as I am, have refused the offers of salvation? Would I have preferred my chains before the redeemers of grace? Would devils continue devils, and remain in the dungeon of slavery, if the Son of God were authorized to publish liberty to those miserable captives? O no, no.

WE, who have suffered the vengeance of God for so many thousand years, may they add, know how to value the tenders of mercy, were they vouchsafed to us: would we continue in our rebellion, and provoke the dear Redeemer as the children of men do? No, no.

“ But wo to me, may the gospel sinner say, for I am under a better dispensation than the devils were under before their fall, the gospel of grace is urged upon me, which was never so much as offered to fallen angels: and therefore, O wretched devils! Whatsoever may be said against your sins, there is infinitely more to be said against mine. I am the most foolish and wilful rebel that ever waged war against the grace of God.”

II. Christ by assuming our nature has advanced it to the highest honour.

By

By his incarnation the nature of man is united with the second person in the holy Trinity, and the plenitude of the divine nature dwells in his body. Col. ii. 9. "In him (that is in his human nature) dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" as the Shechina of old in the temple. The Æthiopic version renders it, "All the perfection of his Deity in the body of man." Jerom who follows the Syriac, renders it, "All the fulness of the divine nature."

BODILY,] that is, personally, after the manner of the Greeks, who uled the word body for a person. Such is the union between the two natures, that God and man constitute one Christ. Beza.

THE meaning then of the text, is, That the human nature was joined with his divine nature: though with us, the soul and body being united, make a person, yet in Christ the soul and body were so united, as to have ther subsistence not of themselves, as in us, but in the Godhead; for his human nature never subsisted separately and distinctly by any personal subsistence of its own, as it does in other men, but as soon as his body and soul were united, they had their subsistence in the second person in the Trinity,

so that as some have expressed it, there was an inhabitation of the Deity in the humanity ; of God in our nature, really, not symbolically.

THIS informs us, of the great advancement of our fallen nature, by Christ's assuming it into union with the divine nature. Can we think of this honour without admiration and gratitude ? We, who by creation were made lower than the angels, by redemption are advanced above them, by reason of our nearer alliance and approach to the supreme Being.

THE Son of God did not only appear in our nature upon earth, but carries it up into heaven, and there prefers it next to the glorious Deity, When God made man, he advanced his nature above all sublunary beings, when he redeemed him by his Son, he exalted it above all the inhabitants of heaven.

By nature we are more vile than the most despicable worms ; no creatures so contemptible, no, not devils, whose slaves we are ; yet Christ by tabernacling in our flesh, has not only restored, but elevated our nature " above all principalities and powers ;" they surround the redeemer's throne, but are not suffered to sit upon

upon it ; that is the privilege of our nature.

TRUE indeed, they have the honour to be subjects of his kingdom, but not as the saints, to be members of his body: they stand in the relation of servants, but we, in that of children, the angels are his friends, but we his peculiar favourites, they attend him as noblemen do their prince, but the saints ly in his bosom as his endeared spouse. Thus, the meanest believer, by reason of his affinity with the divine nature, is exalted above the highest seraphim.

THE human nature of Christ is dearer to God than all the holy angels ; it is more glorious and amiable in his eye than all the creation ; nay, more, he who wears our nature in heaven, receives religious homage from the world of angels Heb. i. 6. “ Let all the angels of God worship him.”

To be transformed into angels has been no little honour to us, but Christ, taking upon him the seed of Abraham crowned it with a higher degree of glory “ The Word was made flesh,” the meanest part of man, John i. 14. Thus, he who made all things, became one of the meanest things, he humbled himself, the

he might exalt us. By his incarnation, the nature of man is united with that of God, they meet together in a personal union ; this is the glory put upon the human nature, a nature which the supreme king delights to honour.

III. THERE is no way to heaven but by Jesus Christ. No other way of dispensing pardon. This is the peculiar honour of Christ's name, that it is the only name whereby we must be saved ; there is no salvation in any other. No name erected as a shelter for the nations to trust in, but this name ; those therefore, who reject his mediation must infallibly perish for no other sacrifice was ever substituted in the room of sinners. No other ark can secure us from the deluge of divine wrath. God is in Christ reconciling the world, and in him alone. Acts iv. 12. Mat. xii. 21. 2 Cor. v. 18, 19.

If there had been any other method to save man, it is not likely that the Son of God would have taken upon him our sordid nature, or that the Father would have exposed him to so much contempt and pain. Can we suppose that he, whose tender mercies are over all his works, would have wounded and bruised his

his dearest Son for our sins, merely to shew the terrors of his justice, if his justice had not been really implacable without it ?

WHY should Christ become a man of sorrows, and resist even unto blood, if atonement could have been made at an easier rate ? Could not he who made the world by a word, redeem it by a word, if it had stood with the honour of his perfections ? If the justice of God could have been satisfied with any thing less than his death, how can we reconcile the infliction of it with moral equity ?

If man's salvation could have been procured by any other way, would not the Father have answered that request of his Son in the letter of it, " that the cup might pass from him ;" but his drinking the very dregs of it, shews it was morally impossible to restore mankind any other way than by his death. This will appear by taking a short view of the most probable means.

COULD fallen man be restored by absolute mercy ? By no means. It is true, there is in God an essential tenderness, or a sufficiency to shew mercy, but our salvation is not founded upon this, but the death of Christ ; if he had not suffered for

for us, our wound had been for ever as incurable as that of devils.

THE consideration of God's merciful nature, administers no relief to fallen angels, nor to fallen man, but through the kind interposition of a mediator.

COULD man himself offer any thing for his readmission? No, for were it possible, for us now to obey perfectly, our exactest obedience could not compensate for former transgressions: but alas! we are so far from being able to yield complete obedience, that of ourselves we are not able to think a good thought.

So deep and universal is the corruption, that we cannot serve God without sinning against him. How deficient are we in our best devotions? How imperfect are our graces? How weak our faith? How cold our love? O the infirmities and iniquities of our holy things!

CAN we by suffering the damnation of hell, make an adequate compensation to God for our sins? No, no: that of hell is an involuntary suffering, and disproportionate to the crime. Besides, they are still sinners, and none can make an effectual atonement for sin, but he, who is without sin, and perfect in holiness.

H

SAD

SAD case ! to be always suffering, and never be able to satisfy, to be for ever in extremity of pain, without being able to make satisfaction, or procuring so much as one moment of ease. O miserable state ! to be always weeping and wailing, enduring the bitterness of a thousand deaths, without a drop of comfort, or so much as a glimpse of hopes, that they after all shall merit the favour of an offended God. When ten thousand times ten thousand millions of years are past, they shall be so far from purchasing their release from that fearful dungeon, as they were upon the first moment of their confinement.

CAN reprobates work their rescue by power ? By no means. Can feeble worms contend with an omnipotent arm ? Alas ! they are naked to the strokes of justice, no moment but they feel the smart of the rod, without being able to move a finger in defence of themselves. There is a way into hell, but none out of it. The devils who excel in strength, have long struggled with God, but never have been able to shake off the least chain.

CAN the holy angels minister any help to us ? No. They are not able to secure themselves from a revolt ; their standing

is the fruit of Grace ; much less able are they to recover revolted sinners : if God does not help, how shall they do it ? they cannot assist their fallen brethren. Can they extend their smiles to those on whom God frowns ? And if they did, can that sweeten their bitter cup ? Who is he that can comfort when God punishes ?

IV. THIS doctrine discovers one great reason of the devil's opposition to mankind.

HE envies our renewed felicity by a saviour : it cannot but give him the greatest uneasiness to see fallen man redeemed, and himself ruined, to see mansions of glory prepared for apostate man, and blackness of darkness entailed upon himself and companions for ever. O it is this, it is this that fills him with implacable enmity against us, and makes it delightful to him to bring us into the same condemnation !

IF the fallen angels were not such great sufferers, yet it could not but sensibly affect them, to see those vacant seats above, which they left, filled up by men who deserved the same condemnation with themselves ; how do they rage to

see man, a clod of despicable dust, restored to the favour of God, and themselves, who once were glorious angels, cast out of his presence for ever? The loss of heaven cannot but grieve them, but it adds the utmost vexation to their grief, to see man, who was their slave, drawn thither with the cords of love, and themselves left bound in chains of darkness for ever. O this is the cutting thought! it is this makes him pursue us with unwearied rage and malice, that if possible he may baffle the kind designs of mercy towards us.

HIS malicious attempts against mankind will render his chains more heavy; though he know this, and trembles at the prospect, yet cannot forbear his temptations. How great is his enmity and hatred against us, when neither the wrath he actually feels, nor the superadded vengeance he so justly fears, can abate the force of it.

V. How deep are our engagements to the great Redeemer?

HE might have assumed the nature of angels, and not the seed of Abraham, and had he redeemed them, and not man, he had done us no wrong, for we had

had no more right to mercy than they had.

SIN banished them from heaven, and man from paradise ; they are left in their exiled state, and so should we, but for the indulgence of a saviour, who was under no more obligation to us than he was to them. But for his blood the terrible gulf had been fixed when Adam fell, and the way to heaven for ever blocked up. If he had not died for us, the sentence passed upon us had been irreversible, and our distance from God had been everlasting.

'Tis through his death that the divine throne is accesible, that the gates of the new paradise are opened, and that we are invited to return from banishment. Lord, how is it thou hadst no affection for them, when thou wert overcome with love to us ? What deformity in them that was not in us ?

HE saw us wallowing in our blood, and in his great pity rescued us from bondage ; but those eyes that pitied us had no compassion upon fallen angels. Dear Jesus ! What reason for this difference ? Were we better or more deserving creatures than they ? By no means. Were

H 3

they

they rebels? So were we. Did we want mercy? So did they.

MAY they say, how lamentable is our case? Our present pain, though grievous, admits of no relief. No intervals of ease in the fiery furnace: we have nothing in view but endless horrors, dark and tragical scenes of unmixed and durable sorrow. We are fallen under the heavy displeasure of God, the weight of his hand is unsupportable. O wretched creatures that we are! Well may our hearts break, since there is no room left for hope.

FAREWEL all comforts, may they add, we are doomed to destruction. Rage, horror, anguish, and despair; O these are the furies that must be our eternal companions. The wound is intolerable, what shall we do? Are there no linitives? Is there no balm in Gilead? Are there no bowels left for us? O no, no. We tremble, we sink under the burden, and O that we could die, or be annihilated, then there would be an end of our pain; but alas! How vain is our complaint? Who regards our lamentations? There is none to loose our bonds, none to bring us so much as a drop of cold water to cool our tongues in these devouring flames.

Now

Now, this might have been the case of all mankind, and we had certainly sunk into the same hell, if God had not laid our our iniquities upon his Son, who expiated them by the sacrifice of himself, Heb. ix. 26.

Al! blessed Jesus! Whither did thy affections to rebellious man carry thee? What couldst thou have done and suffered more for him? What shall we render for this distinguishing love? O that our lives were continued anthems of praise!

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

The original of our salvation. Man's duty to honour his nature, and advance the Redeemer's interest by obedience and suffering. The condescension of Christ considered in variety of particulars. His incarnation, the infirmities attending the human nature. The sorrows of his life, circumstances of his crucifixion, pain, shame, &c. The triumphs of mercy and justice. The supremacy of our affection due to Father, Son, and Spirit, the sacred three that bear record in heaven.

IN order to make a further improvement of this truth, I recommend the following instructions to the reader.

1. Ascribe the glory of your salvation to divine and undeserved grace.

2. Dishonour not the nature Christ has so enobled.

3. Appear every way for the Redeemer's glory.

4. Let

4. Let his taking on him the seed of Abraham be the subject of your frequent meditation.

5. Make due reflections on the administration of justice and mercy.

6. Return love for love to Father, Son, and Spirit.

I. Ascribe the glory of your salvation to divine grace alone.

THERE was no other attractive or impulsive cause. Tit. iii. 5. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done; but according to his mercy he saved us, Eph. ii, 5. By grace ye are saved, ver. 8. Tit. ii. 11. The grace of God which bringeth salvation."

WHEN we were professed enemies, and worthy of his deepest resentment and detestation, even then he smiled upon us in the promise of a saviour. The plague of sin could not but render our nature loathsome and filthy, yet he espoused us to himself, yea, lodged us in his bosom, as if we had been the most agreeable beings, and his dearest familiars.

IN order to recover fallen man, the Son of God is dispatched from heaven, with a commission to die for us. John x. 18. "This commandment have I received from
from

from the Father ;” that is, that he should lay down his life. Not such a command that made his death necessary before he consented to it, For the Son was free from any obligations to till he engaged himself.

HERE our Lord dies by a command of God the Father. “ But by what law does an innocent man die for a criminal ?” Answ. Not by the moral law, or the law of nature, or indeed by any law published by God unto his creatures, as the rule of their obedience ; therefore his death was by a precept in the law of mediation, or that federal transaction and agreement between the Father and Son before time, about the salvation of man, commonly called the covenant of redemption.

THE Father’s call to this mediatorial work, and Christ’s consent to it were equally necessary. This command of God gave him a full authority to die ; if he had not received such a command, he had no authority to lay down his life no more than Abraham had to sacrifice his son, of his own head, without a special licence from heaven.

Now, what could move God to entertain such favourable thoughts towards

us,
dear
free
Fath
fight
O

shee
herd
a ser
that
men
the l
ranso
preci
thy
healin
it. I
to us
out st
6, 8.

Ho
Stran
soldie
just f
the cl
O Lo
don’t
as the
Ho
depths

us, so as to propose our recovery by the death of his Son? Nothing but his own free and sovereign pleasure? "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

O the wonders of divine love! The sheep wander and trespass, and the shepherd is smitten and slain; man becomes a servant to tribute, and the master dies that the slave might live. Man commences an unnatural war against God; the Prince of life lays down his life to ransom the provoking rebel. Shed his precious blood for him that was not worthy to live, and continues to offer its healing virtue to those who trample upon it. Herein "God commended his love to us in that while we were sinners without strength, Christ died for us," Rom. v. 6, 8.

How surprising this turn of providence? Strange! the general should die for the soldier, the physician for the patient, the just for the unjust, the Lord of glory for the children of disobedience. This is not, O Lord, after the manner of men, who don't use to treat their greatest enemies as their dearest friends.

How astonishing is this pity? O the depths of the riches of grace! We are healed

healed by his wounds, restored by his compassion, and entitled to a better paradise by his merit, though we, as well as devils, deserved the fatal blow, and might have been “ kept in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day,” Jude 6.

THERE were no motives of love in us ; unless want of the divine image could pass for one. By nature we are dead in trespasses and sins, and unable to quicken ourselves without his help, who is mighty to save, What need of a favour, if salvation had been within the verge of our own power ? If after the fall we had been wholly left to ourselves without a mediator, as the devils are, we had been devils too ; miserable for ever.

LET us then acknowledge the redeemer’s grace, and ascribe glory to him, who, when he provided for our happiness left them in their sins ; the law denounced the same, judgment against us and them, and if the process had been according to the rules of strict justice, we must have been their miserable and inseparable companions : and O how admirable is the love that made such unspeakable difference between us and them, when sin had rendered both equally obnoxious to the law !

A tribute of gratitude is due to him, who descended from his high throne into the grave, and rose again to give us a resurrection to life. O let us offer unto him the sacrifice of praise and sincere affection. " Blessing, and honour, and glory, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever, for he is worthy," Rev. v. 12, 13.

WHAT affectionate returns is due to him, who by the effusion of his blood asswaged those floods of wrath that were ready to overwhelm us, who were overwhelmed with more sins to be hated, than sorrow to be pitied? The glory of our restored state must be attributed to him, whose blood cries louder for pardon, than our iniquities for justice.

GRACE is a divine beam, not primitive in our nature, but derived from Christ the Sun of Righteousness. How does the firmament of glory sparkle with stars, bright and holy angels? All these borrow their lustre from him, who is the father of lights. Our great redeemer who has brought immortality to light, is the star that conducts us to heaven, the eternal sanctuary. He the pen that enrols our names in the book of life, the wing on which we take our flight into the

I

world

world of spirits, the eye that presents us with a view of those glorious realities that are not visible to an eye of sense. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ.

II. Let us not dishonour the nature that Christ has so enobled by his incarnation.

GOD made man upright, and cloathed him with honour, which he soon exchanged for disgrace and infamy, for sin is the reproach of the human nature. Now Christ, by assuming this nature, has not only wiped off that reproach, but rendered it once more considerable in the sight of God. By its union with the divine nature, it is dignified in the highest manner, for thereby it is advanced above the highest order of created beings; and shall we, by wallowing in sin, degrade it beneath the brutal nature? It shines upon the throne with a brightness superior to that of angels, and shall we debase it by fordid and gross sensuality?

OUR nature is in heaven, and its purity the admiration of angels, and shall we disgrace our glorified nature, by making it stoop to the slavery of sin? To yield our members to be instruments of

of unrighteousness and sin, is to turn the sacred temple of God into a noisome dunghil. What horrid violence do gluttons and drunkards offer to this venerable nature, when they pollute it with intemperance? How does the unclean wretch dishonour it by making it the member of an harlot?

Is he who assumed our nature holy? And shall we be impure? Has he washed it in the pure fountain of his blood? And shall we defile it with the nauseous vomit of sin? Is God in our nature full of divine and pacific clemency? is he slow to anger? And shall we be soon angry, and upon every slight occasion indulge a revengeful temper? Did he adorn our nature with the garments of humility and meekness? And shall we by pride and passion expose the dignity of it?

THE redeemer in our nature loves God, and hates sin, and should not our affections correspond with those of Christ? Try then, is God the supreme object of thy love? And as to sin, is that the object of thy severest hatred? Is there an irreconcilable war begun and carried on against it? Do we resolutely oppose the first sallies of corruption? Are we harmless and holy, wise as serpents and inno-

cent as doves ? Do we keep ourselves unspotted from the world ? If so, we greatly honour our nature, and him who wears it in heaven : And, what can be more honourable to ourselves than to be moulded into the divine image, and act on earth in concert with our glorious redeemer in heaven ? Is not this the sum of the gospel, to walk as Christ walked. What is christianity, but a transcript of his life, or a conformity to his precepts and pattern ?

As his conversation was a living law, so 'tis an original, of which our practice should be a counterpart. We should be like him in universal holiness, for holiness is the beauty of that nature, which is elevated to the highest dignity in heaven, the habitation of holiness.

III. Let us appear for the glory of our redeemer with the utmost vigour both by doing and suffering.

It is not enough to keep ourselves, unspotted from a polluting world, but we must be active for his interest, paying equal regard to the will of his precept and providence.

THE fallen angels are banished from the court of heaven, and the Son of God came into this world to invite us thither.

He

He shed his blood to purchase it, and sent his spirit to qualify, us for its entertainments. All he did and suffered in the flesh was in our stead, and for our advantage. And shall not we be willing to do and suffer any thing for his sake, who loved us to the death?

1. Shall we not honour him who delivered us from the wrath to come?

HAS he not with his own blood quenched the flame kindled by our sins, and so saved our souls from going down to the pit? He suffered that penalty which the law threatened against sinners, and so satisfied the lawgiver. And shall we think any service or suffering too much for him, who redeemed us from the curse of the law, whose sentence against us had been otherwise irreversible.

SAY, Lord, give me understanding to know thee, and to contemplate the wonders of thy love. Give me a will to do all in subordination to thee. O give me an ear to hear thy voice, and a tongue to publish thy glories, an eye to behold thy statutes, and feet to walk in them. O fill me with a solicitous concern for thy kingdom, that is opposed by the united powers of earth and hell.

CAN we be silent when the Son of God is trodden under foot, when his divinity is insulted, and the blood of the covenant counted an unholy thing? Can we sit still and be unconcerned, when we see his grace despised, his blessed day profaned, his religion and followers treated with contempt, even by those who call themselves christians.

SHOULD not this awaken our resentments, and excite us to a greater zeal for the glory of the mediator? It is reported of Cræsus his son, that he was dumb all his days, till he saw a soldier offering to murder his father, upon which the tender affections he bore to him, broke the bars of his speech, and he cried out, O don't kill Cræsus. The regards due to the honour of Christ, should be infinitely more strong, and prompt us to open our mouths for him, though we never spoke before. O let our heads project, our hands act, and our mouths speak for him!

2. Shall not we be ready to suffer for him, who died for us?

HE was not ashamed of assuming our ignoble nature, or enduring the contradiction and reproaches of sinners. And shall

shall we think it much to be despised for our strict adherence to his laws? Was he vilified for our sakes? Yes: And shall we count it much to be reproached for him? The persecuted apostles esteemed it their honour to be disgraced for him, therefore departed from the council, rejoicing, Acts v. 41.

THERE is no true christian but has in him a disposition to sacrifice his dearest interests for Christ, when his cause requires it. Self-denial, indeed, is the first principle in christianity, and a constitutive part of it. Our Lord who bids us take up the cross, led the way, “Endured the cross, despising the shame. He bore our grief, and carried our sorrows, he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities.”

THE primitive christians followed him to heaven through much tribulation: they professed the truth with an ardency, peculiar, to themselves, and sealed it with their blood, rather than dishonour their Lord, by an ignominious desertion; no promises of reward, nor threatenings of pain could tempt those noble champions to desert the captain of their salvation.

WHEN those primitive heroes were condemned to die for Christ, they beheld
the

the flames wherein they were to burn, with unterrified minds, cheerfully embraced the stake as the way to the crown, for they reckoned that the sufferings of this present time, were not worthy to be compared with the glory which should be revealed in them. Thus the christian martyr told Trypho the Jew, “ Though
 “ our arms be exposed to swords and
 “ axes, our bodies fastened to the cross, or
 “ thrown to wild beasts, yet do we not
 “ start from our sacred profession.”

IN the Acts of St Cyprian's passion, we are told, that the President having caused a great furnace to be filled with burning lime and fire, with heaps of frankincense round the brim of it, gave the christians their choice, either to burn the frankincense in sacrifice to Jupiter their idol god, or to be thrown into the furnace ; whereupon they leapt into the burning furnace : thus about three hundred of them perished in the flames, chusing rather to die the most cruel death, rather than deny, or dishonour their holy profession.

THERE were various kinds of punishments invented by their persecutors to deter them from the profession of christianity, the religion of Christ : some were nailed to the cross, where they remained
 in

in exquisite pains, till they were starved out of the world by hunger. Sometimes they were crucified with their heads downwards, as the Egyptian martyrs. Others they roasted alive before a slow fire, that they might die with greater torment. Some were hung up by the hands, and others by the feet, and great fires made under them, by which they were miserably smothered. Some were clad with coats of paper and linen, daubed with pitch and brimstone, and other combustible matter, which being set on fire, consumed them in a most miserable manner. Others were shut up in the belly of a brazen bull, and a fire being kindled under it, were consumed with a torment beyond imagination.

IN some places they were thrown into great vessels full of boiling pitch and oil. Others were hung up by one hand with stones of great weight tied to their feet to augment their sufferings. Some had their bodies anointed with honey, and at mid day fastened to the top of a pole, that they might be a prey to flies and wasps, &c. which by degrees tormented them to death. The Sebastian martyrs in St Basil, were in the depth of winter constrained to stand naked all night in cold

cold frosty weather in a pond of water.
Euseb. &c.

THESE tortures, and a thousand times more they suffered in honour of Christ; when they could not serve him with their lives, they sacrificed their lives for him. "Wherefore seeing we are compassed about with such a great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and with patience run the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus," Heb. xii. 1, 2. Let us arm ourselves with the same affections and resolves, and be ready to do and suffer any thing for the honour and interest of our great Redeemer.

IV. Let his taking upon him the seed of Abram, be the subject of your frequent and pious meditation.

GREAT is the mystery of godliness: adore what you cannot fathom. Strange he should assume such a nature, and die such a death! What, God become man, the mighty Elohim a feeble mortal? what more astonishing, than that he, whom the heaven of heavens adore, should be confined to the womb of a virgin, that he, who made mankind, should himself become the son of man, and born of a
woman

woman, who derived her being from his almighty power. What stupendous acts of providence are these !

FOR God to become mortal, and obedient unto death, is more than if angels had been degraded into worms. He had not the privilege of Adam, who in a moment was made in the perfection of his nature, i. e. a complete man, but our Lord must make his appearance in the world by the common way of natural birth, and stoop to a state of helpless infancy.

No sooner born than persecuted. Behold the God of heaven flying in the arms of a woman, from the rage of a mortal man ; the God of Israel driven out of the bosom of the church into Egypt, “ Where the child Jesus, being by design or providence carried into a temple, all the statutes of the idol gods fell down, like Dagon at the presence of the ark.” Bishop Taylor’s life of Christ.

It is further amazing, that he took on him not only the form of a man, but that of a servant, which is a kind of lower degree of humiliation. Phil. ii. 7. “ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant ;” that is,
man’s

man's servile nature, (without any external honour) after it had lain about four thousand years in the common shore of sin. He did not assume man's nature as it was in Adam before the fall, while it stood in its primitive perfection and glory, but after sin had defaced it. How strange is this condescension ! God comes down from heaven, in the similitude * of a menial servant, to minister and serve, and not to be ministered to.

HE, who was in the form of God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, scarce appears like a man : the infinite brightness of his nature was concealed under the veil of his humanity ; and O how surprising is it to behold the sun of righteousness under such an eclipse ! to see the glory of heaven veiled with a cloud of obscurity ! to see that bright morning-star transformed as it were a glow-worm.

THOUGH our Redeemer was the sovereign Lord of nature, yet became subject to the law of nature, as born of a woman, and surety for the transgressors
of

* Significat proprie, similitudinem, vel imaginem alicujus rei expressam ut forma sigilli expressa in cera.

of it. Was circumcised the eight day, and so submitted to the ceremonial, as well as to the moral law. He became obnoxious to the penal infirmities belonging to the human nature, as weariness, hunger, thirst, grief, mortality, &c. tho' these were not sinful in themselves, however they were the consequents of sin, and marks of its conquest over our nature: so that not only his divinity, but even his humanity was debased, therefore it is said, he was made in the likeness of sinful flesh, Rom. viii. 3. Not only of flesh, but sinful flesh, that is, he did not only assume our nature with all its essential properties, but as sullied with sin;

UPON this score he was treated as a reputed sinner, accused of intemperance and sorcery, and at last condemned for pretended blasphemy, imposture and treason.

THUS the Lord of glory made "himself of no reputation;" he who was all in all, reduced himself to nothing. Phil. ii. 7. "He emptied himself," i. e. of his primitive glory. Abased himself to that degree, as to suffer all kind of indignities from men, even the refuse of the people.

K

WHAT

WHAT strange and surprising turns in his incarnate life ! Behold, I shew you a mystery ! The bread of life is hungry, the fountain of living waters thirsty, the light of heaven darkened, the source of activity and motion weary, the prince of life dead.

THE low circumstances in which he appeared, afford matter of just admiration. " Though rich, he became poor for our sakes." Derived his being, as man, from a mean family, his blessed mother a poor virgin, his reputed father a mechanic. These were his nearest relatives according to the flesh. " Born," saith bishop Taylor, " in a poor place, in " a cold winter's night, far from home, " among strangers, with all the circum- " stances of humility and poverty. No " man will have cause to complain of " his coarse robe, if he remembers the " swaddling cloaths of this holy child, " nor be disquieted at his hard bed, when " he considers Jesus laid in a manger." Life of Christ.

HE had no place wherein to lay his head, though Lord of all the earth, nor money to pay his tax without working a miracle for it. Mat. xvii. 27.

" Now

“ Now, since the eternal wisdom of
 “ the Father, who knew to chuse the
 “ good, and refuse the evil, did chuse a
 “ life of poverty ; it gives us demonstra-
 “ tion, that riches and honours, those i-
 “ dols of the world’s esteem, are so far
 “ from creating true felicities, that they
 “ are not of themselves eligible in the
 “ number of good things. However,
 “ no man is to be ashamed of innocent
 “ poverty, of which many wise men
 “ made vows, and of which the holy Je-
 “ sus made election, and his apostles
 “ after him, made public profession. *ibid.*

THOUGH he was the king of glory, he
 divested himself of that dignity peculiar
 to him as the Son of God, and never ap-
 peared in royal pomp and state. The
 princes of the earth, in their progress
 usually go mounted, but the King of kings
 traveled up and down a foot, till he went
 to die ; then indeed he enters Jerusalem
 with an air of seeming triumph, but it
 was upon an ass, a borrowed ass, with-
 out any furniture or equipage. Great
 men of old, it is true were wont to ride
 upon asses, but after Solomon’s time, and
 the Jews commerce with Egypt, they
 procured an increase of horses, and from
 that time, only the poorer sort among

them rode upon asses, creatures formed not for state, but service.

“ THIS was but a poor piece of state. “ How far was our Lord from affecting “ worldly grandeur! Yet because he “ was a king, he would be proclaimed “ such, but that it might appear his king- “ dom was not of this world, he de- “ clines a pompous procession, and all “ marks of temporal sovereignty,” chusing rather to suffer affliction with and for the people of God, than to enjoy these for a season; esteeming the reproach of the cross greater riches than the treasures of the earth.

HITHERTO we have considered his lesser trials, which were preparatives to his last sufferings, we now enter upon the bloody scene: no sooner was the sentence of death passed upon him, but his precious body was torn with cruel scourgings. This correction by stripes was often a preparation for death among the Romans; the manner of it remarkable.

THEY stripped the condemned person, and bound him to a post, where two strong men scourged him with rods of thorns; after them came two other men, who whipped the criminal with whips, made of cords full of knots; and when they

they had done, two other officers laid on with whips of wire, which tore off the flesh: this was a most barbarous punishment, especially as inflicted by the Romans, who were not under the restriction of the Jewish law, which forbid scourgings above forty times.

It is probable our blessed Redeemer submitted to this barbarous discipline, and that the Psalmist referred to it when he said, "The plowers plowed upon my back, and made long furrows," Psal. cxxix. 2.

THUS we are healed by his stripes. Sin is our disease, and the Redeemer's blood the balm that cures it. He was chastised with whips, that we might not be for ever chastised with scorpions. We committed the crime, and he endured the punishment. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. He shed his blood, not because we were righteous, but to make us so.

AT last they nailed him to the tree, whereon he died, his death was the perfection of his troubles, and that which put the highest emphasis upon his love. His former afflictions were like scattered drops of rain, but here all the showers of wrath

from heaven, hell, and earth broke out together against him. In this dark hour the anger of God, the rage of man, and fury of devils, conspired and united against him.

How black were the clouds that gathered about Mount Calvery? there it was the waters of the flood encreased the fountains of the great deep were broken up. O the length, depth, breadth and height of his love in the last conflict! Ah! who can refrain from tears, to think we love him no more, who put himself to such pains for us?

THE death of the cross must needs be very painful to him. if we consider,

1. The tenderness of his body.
2. Inhumanity of his treatment.
3. Slowness of his death.
4. The curse annexed to it.
5. The shame attending it.

(1.) THE admirable tenderness of his body made this death very painful to him, perhaps more so than to another.

No flesh was ever so soft and tender, nor so acutely quick in the sense of feeling; and that which made him more affected with his wounds, was their fastening him to the cross with nails, driven through

through his hands and feet, these being above all other parts of the body most sensible of torment, by reason that they abound with nerves and sinues, the great instruments of feeling.

HIS body was exquisitely preceptive of painful impressions, therefore the nails could not be driven through those tender parts of it, without unspeakable torture ; besides what pain was caused by hanging so many hours with his hands stretched abroad, bearing the weight of his body by them.

HIS being God did no way lessen the pain, for the divine nature that supported him under his sufferings, did not diminish or alleviate the force of it. He paid all our debts without any abatement, or allowance ; not a drop of the bitter cup but he drunk it ; he filled up the determined measure of sorrow without any deduction.

THE vehemency of his passion in the garden threw him into a bloody sweat : in his agony he cries out, " O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." And how unsupportable his burden upon the cross was, appears by that mournful exclamation, " My God, my
God,

God, why hast thou forsaken me !" Mat. xxvi. 39.

BEHOLD here the deciding battle between the serpent and seed of the woman ! The powers of hell are let loose, and these set all the engines of darkness at work to torment him, but in vain they exert their outrageous malice, for the mortal blow recoiled upon themselves ; even in his death he triumphed over them. When chained to the cross, and seemingly destitute of not only of personal strength, but of all foreign assistance, even then he led captivity captive, by an irresistible arm made multitudes captives. By dying he conquered sin, Satan, and death, and subjected to himself those who were led captives by them. That which makes the victory the more remarkable, is, that it was obtained by his own obedience unto death. Omnipotent power, that without his death, could easily conquer the adversaries, now suspends its activity, for a while leaving the great Mediator to manage the final conflict by his own righteousness and strength.

IN his way to the place of execution, he is constrained to carry the cross upon his own shoulders, the weight of which was so great, that he began to sink under

it ;

it ; and his enemies fearing he might die on the road with less pain and shame than they intended to inflict upon him, they pressed one Simon a Cyrenean, to carry the tree on which he was to suffer.

AH dear Jesus ! Who can behold thee with dry eyes, marching with the cross on thy tender shoulders towards Golgotha, that gloomy hill of death, and common charnal-house of the city ; a remarkable spot of ground, being the place where Adam is (by some) supposed to be buried, and where Abraham erected an altar to sacrifice his son.

THE traditions of the jews and ancient christians about the interment of Adam, are somewhat peculiar. In reverence to the temple of Jerusalem, the Jews tell us that Adam offered his urst sacrifice on the mount Moriah, on which Solomon's temple was built, it is, say they, a very ancient tradition transmitted to us by our doctors, viz.

“ That the place where Aaron's thresh-
 “ ing floor stood, and where David erected an altar, and in a little time after, Solomon built the temple, was the same place where Abraham made an altar to sacrifice his son Isaac, and the same place where Noah built an altar and sacrificed
 after

after his coming out of the ark ; the same place where Cain and Abel offered their sacrifices, and the same place where Adam the first man made his first offering after his creation. Our sages and doctors have told us, that Adam was created in the same place, where was made the propitiation of his sin.

ACCORDING to this tradition, Adam was created out of the earth of mount Moriah in Jerusalem, or Salem, the habitation of Melchisedeck. Pierk. Rabbi Eliezer. cap. 12.

WITHOUT all doubt, the ancients had heard something of this tradition of the Jews, when they say, Adam was created out of the same earth, and buried in the same earth, upon which propitiation was made for his sin ; that is, that Adam was buried on mount Calvary, where our Saviour died for sin.

THE better to embellish this story, they tell us, that this mount had got the name of Golgotha, or the place of a skull, because Adam's skull was found there. From this supposition have been drawn diverse mysterious imaginations, viz. that the skull and ashes of the firstman, who introduced sin into the world, was incorporated with the blood of him

who

who was come to expiate that sin ; which is in plain terms, as much as that the second Adam is the redeemer of the first, that his blood which washes away the sins of the first man, being mixed with his ashes, has produced the seed of resurrection and eternal life.

I must confess, says Monsieur Jurieu, I don't much scruple to call the truth of this tradition in question, yet cannot but retain something of a respect for it, looking upon it like many other curious pieces of antiquity which are the products of the ancient sculptures ; whose statutes, though not always made after living originals, nevertheless, being excellent pieces, were preserved for the extraordinaryness and height of fancy, shown in them by their authors.

I would not be too forward in exclaiming against it as a mere fiction, in respect to those great persons who did believe it to be true, and have transmitted it to us for such : among those are Epiphanius, Origen, Basil, Chrysostom, and before them Tertullian, who expresses it thus
a metre :

Golgo-

Golgotha locus est, capitis calvaria quondam.
Lingua paterna prior sic illum nomine dixit,
Hic medium terræ est.-----*

*Hic hominem primum suscepimus esse Sepultum.
Hic patitur Christus, pio sanguine terra madescit
Pulvis adæ, ut possit veteris cum sanguine Christi
Commixtus stillantis aquæ virtute levare.
Adversus Marcionem. Lib. II. p. 524.
Franckeræ. CIO. IO. XCVII.*

But to return. When our blessed Lord arrived at Galgotha, the tree to which he was nailed, by its fall into the place of its station in the ground, gave him infinite torture by so violent a concussion of his tender body.

OTHERS are of opinion he only carried the cross piece of the tree. St Cyprian affirms what is yet more doleful, namely, that Christ did stick to the tree which he carried, being nailed to it before he came to the place of execution. Tu ipse patibuli tui bajulus, hærebas lignum quod tuleras, Erectionis & Passionis anxietates sustinens & labores Cypriani Opera Excudebat Jonnes le Preux. M.D.XCII. XIII De Passione Christi. P. 518. Arg. 6

(2.) TH

Matth. xxvii.

(2.) THE inhumanity wherewith he was treated encreased his pain.

Is it nothing to you all ye that pass by? Behold and see, if there be any sorrow like unto his sorrow. Upon his trial, and upon the road to his execution, how was he insulted by his judges, as well as the soldiery! While he hung on the tree, what showers of reproach, contempt, and indignity were poured upon him! Never was there a more innocent man, or a greater sufferer, and yet was denied even the common relief of pity, a favour usually extended to the worst of malefactors, especially in their dying extremities.

To pity is one of the properties of the human nature, to deny it to miserable objects, is, as it were, to offer violence to our constitution, and to be worse than our nature inclines us to be: to express a tender concern for men in distress, is to swim with the stream of natural inclination; no man but is more or less endued with a native tenderness that prompts him to acts of pity upon proper occasions: pity, this is a common lenitive, and to which the vilest of men in their misery think themselves entitled, but our suffering Lord had no share, no not in this kind

L

of

of relief: in the midst of his anguish he endured cruel mockings.

HE expected compassion, as well he might, considering the greatness of his sorrow, Psal. lxxix. 20. "Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness, and I looked for some to pity, and there was none, and for comforters, and I found none." It added to his affliction from his enemies, that all his disciples forsook him and fled.

DEAR Jesus! Was ever condition like thine! Did ever any suffer such universal contempt and scorn! The spectators of his sufferings had him in derision every where, not only when tried for his life, but when he hung on the cross; the common people, who very seldom are deficient in compassion to dying persons, derided our dying Lord; the soldiers, who by their office were obliged to guard him against the insults of the mob, joined with them in making a mock of his sufferings; the magistrates, whose place it was to screen him from affronts, reviled the innocent sufferer, and spread themselves among the rabble on purpose to animate their rage.

YEA, so great was the corruption of the Jewish church at this time, that her very

As they

very priests reproached him, even in his dying moments, than which nothing could be more barbarous. "How is the faithful city become a harlot? It was full of judgment, righteousness lodged in it, but now murderers. Ah sinful nation! a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters." Isa. i. 4, 21.

How did their impotent malice triumph! Having stripped him of his garments, they put on him the mock-habilliments of majesty, and made a sham king of him, thereby ridiculing his pretensions to dominion and sovereignty.

THEY covered him with a scarlet robe, put a mock-sceptre into his right hand, and a crown of thorns upon his head, to render him ridiculous. They bowed the knee, and so made a jest of his sacred person, they spit in his face, that "blessed face which outshines the sun, and before which the holy angels cover their faces." They smote him on the head, and probably on the crown of thorns, and so struck them into his head to give it the deeper wound: and thus they made his misery the matter of their diversion and pleasure.

As he went to the place of execution they took off the mock-robe of state, and

no mention being made of taking away the crown of thorns, some have supposed that he was crucified with that crown on his head. In a word, they loaded him with all the disgrace and infamy that infernal malice could conspire them with. Never was a worm so trampled upon, an innocent that suffered so much, or that was so despised and rejected of men.

(3.) THE slowness of his death made it more terrible.

THOSE parts of the body that are most distant from the vital, were nailed to the tree, which made his pain more lingering and tedious; he felt himself dying.

So great was the pain of crucifixion, that some judges out of a generous pity, caused malefactors to be strangled before they were crucified. An instance of which we have in the pirates, whom Julius Cæsar had sworn to execute on the cross. Constantine the first christian emperor, abolished that use of the cross among the Romans.

WHEN death is speedily executed, the sense of pain is soon over: but our dear Lord was upon the rack for three hours. It is true, many had been longer on the cross,

cross, but all whoever died upon it, were their pains put together, can not be said to suffer so much as Christ did, when he made his soul an offering for sin.

ST. Andrew was two whole days upon the cross, and though in violent pain, yet preached to the spectators all the time: some martyrs have been rather starved, and devoured by birds than killed with the proper torment of the cross.

WE read how Timotheus, and his wife Maura hung on the cross nine days together, before they completed their martyrdom, but had their misery being protracted to a thousand years, it had fallen short of his sufferings, who was Emmanuel, God with us. His senses continued in their full vigour to the very last, which made his pain more afflictive to him.

SOME think his agonies on the cross were not altogether so great as those in the garden, where he sweat thick drops of blood, when there was no visible hand to afflict him. How unconceivably great were those troubles of his soul that caused such dismal commotions in his body! and O how transcendent was the love that made him willing to bear all without murmuring!

(4.) ANOTHER aggravation was, the curse annexed to that kind of death. For he that is hanged is accursed of God. Deut. xxi. 23. or (according to the Hebrew, and the Hebræo Samaritan version) is the curse of God. The curse of hanging, under the law, was typical and ceremonial, and had a special reference to our great Redeemer, whose curse, as our surety, was moral and real, as it is applied by the apostle, Gal. iii. 13. "He redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." How surprising and strange is this method of cure! Christ redeems us from a curse, by being made a curse, or hanging on a tree, which had a peculiar brand of infamy put upon it, by the law of Moses. Not that the law did curse Christ, but that expression is applied to him, because, as our surety, he endured that punishment, which the law threatened against sinners.

HENCE it is, that he died by a Roman law, for crucifixion was a Roman Punishment, and not used by the Jews, who had many ways of putting capital offenders to death, as stoning, strangling, burning, beheading, but none of these had a curse annexed to them, as the death of the cross had.

THE

T
of;
und
nifh
tual
fuch
trans
male
infan
had
pel.

(5
is th
shall
SE
it ign
that k
ted,
compa
year,
ked o

I. C
seldom
vilest.
So g
that th
it, ther
man ci

THE law curseth the transgressors thereof; it was necessary therefore he should undergo this execrable death, for no punishment, or satisfaction had been effectual, unless he had been made a curse, or such a sufferer for us, who were the real transgressors: if he had not endured the malediction of the law on the cross, that infamous token of God's displeasure, we had never tasted the blessing of the gospel.

(5.) THE shame attending his death, is the last aggravating circumstance I shall mention.

SEVERAL things conspired to render it ignominious, as the persons to whom that kind of death was usually appropriated, the place where he suffered, his companions on the cross, the time of the year, and of the day, and his hanging naked on the cross.

I. CRUCIFIXION was a punishment seldom inflicted on any but slaves, or the vilest of the people.

So great was the indignity of the cross, that the orator wanted words to express it, therefore calls the crucifixion of a Roman citizen, a nameless wickedness. It
was

was indeed generally thought too scandalous a death for the meanest person that was a freeman : when they chose a death to shew their greatest abhorrence of any creature, this was it ; therefore the dogs, that by their silence betrayed the capitol, were crucified.

AND this is the death to which the innocent and holy Jesus submitted, the shame of which he is said to despise, when he endured the pain. So dear was our salvation to him, that no reproaches thrown upon his life, doctrine, and miracles could pall his mind in the pursuit of it ; not all the terror and disgrace which attended that death, could deter him from a cheerful submission to the stroke ; he despised all those affronts and injuries as the impotent efforts of ignorance and malice. Heb. xii. 2.

WITH what admirable composure did he suffer all instances of contempt offered to his royal person ! He might have sharpened the arrows of his wrath, and darted them into the bowels of those who wounded his name, and exposed him to open shame : but he endured all with unmoved patience, and instead of revenging himself on the contrivers of that sad tragedy, he prayed for them.

II. THE

II. THE place where he suffered added to his shame.

IT was at Jerusalem, where once he was greatly honoured for his doctrine and miraculous works, but now is loaded with contempt and reproach, as if his followers had been mistaken in the man.

IF he had suffered death among strangers, the reproach would not have been altogether so great, but to die a disgraceful death in midst of his acquaintance, friends and enemies, gave a very particular accent to the ignominy.

III. HIS companions on the cross contributed not a little to his shame.

IF his fellow sufferers had been persons of character and figure, or suffered in a good cause, it would in some measure have lessened the dishonour; but they crucified him with two common thieves, and placed him in the middle, as if he had been the greatest criminal of the three.

To be crucified with good men is disparaging enough, but to be sorted with malefactors that are the aversion and enemies of mankind, adds a fresh burden to
his

his last sufferings. Isa. liii. 12, "He was numbered with the transgressors."

THUS, according to the prediction, "He was numbered with the transgressors," not only condemned as a malefactor, but executed between two malefactors, and while he lived, his enemies counted him a sinner and a transgressor, and under this imputation delivered him to the Gentiles. John xviii. 30. If he were not a malefactor we would not have delivered him to the thee, i. e. Pilate.

IV. His shame we aggravated by the time of the year.

FOR, he was crucified at the solemn feast, in sight of all Israel, who were then come to Jerusalem to keep the feast of the passover, in commemoration of their deliverance out of Egypt. It was a custom among the Jews to execute malefactors at their public feasts, that all Israel, who were then present, might see and fear.

V. NOR must I omit the time of the day.

HE was nailed to the cross at twelve o'clock, supposed by some to be the time of the day that our first parents fell: he hung the tree from twelve at noon to three

three, (which are the most public hours of the day, when people are up and abroad,) contrary to their traditional law of deferring execution till near sun-set.

VI. **THEY** crucified him naked. Mat. xxvii.

THE shame of nakedness is the fruit of sin, and therefore when Christ came to suffer for sin, he was made naked. How strange is the spectacle! He who cloaths the angels with robes of light, hangs naked himself on a tree. His being covered with a scarlet robe, (which signified his bearing our sins, red like scarlet, in his own body) was only for a little time, and with a design not to guard him against the indecency of a naked posture, but by way of mockery, and as an addition to his disgrace.

THUS we see how the cross was one of the most ignominious executions, and made use of to punish the vilest of men, and worst of malefactors, and yet, this is the death he chose, in order to answer the first threatening, and procure our salvation. The reason of this choice is hid from us; all we know, is, that coming into the world to redeem us from the curse due to our sins, he was pleased to take
this

this curse upon himself, which curse, according to an article in the laws given to the Jews, was joined to the ignominious punishment of the cross.

THE torment that our Lord endured by this kind of death, was exquisite, and exceeded the pangs of an ordinary death, with which the whole world seemed sensibly affected. While men were thus acting the barbarous part, the sun draws a veil of darkness over his naked body, and would not shine while the Sun of Righteousness was under a cloud : the sun in the firmament looked as if it were cloathed in black, to celebrate the death of the Son of God.

THE darkness that begun at noon lasted three hours, being the length of time, according to some divines, that Adam was under the darkness and horror of sin after his fall, before God revealed to him the promise of a redeemer.

Full three long hours his tender body did
sustain

Most exquisite and poignant pain.

So long the sympathizing sun his light
withdrew,

And wondered how the stars their dying
Lord could view.

Norris.
ABOUT

ABOUT three in the afternoon, our dear Redeemer gave up the ghost, which as some have conjectured, was the time of the day when God promised to Adam, that the seed of the woman, that is, Jesus Christ, should break the serpent's head, that is, destroy the empire of Satan.

WHEN our Lord suffered, the earth trembled and quaked, as if it would open its mouth to swallow up those vipers that put him to death. By this concussion of the earth, it declared the innocence of our Lord, and did as it were, attempt to shake his murderers off its back, as a burden it could not endure.

YEA, the rocks that are the hardest part of the earth, rent, and did, as it were, cry out against the horrid impiety of his persecutors. Did the earth quake for fear when our Lord died, and can we hear of his death and not be moved? Did the rocks rent, and shall we remain unaffected? shall rocks and mountains be more sensible of the wrong done our blessed Redeemer, than the redeemed themselves? How sad, O sinner, how sad will thy case be, when insensible nature shall witness in the great day, against thy thy unrelenting and unbroken heart!

M

O my

O my heart! Art thou not harder than a rock, that canst not melt when Jesus Christ is evidently set forth, crucified before thy eyes?

JUST as our Lord expired, "Behold the veil of the temple, (or the partition wall between the most holy and holy place) was rent in twain." When the temple of his body was destroyed, the temple at Jerusalem, that was a type of it, did, as it were, echo and answer to that dissolution by rending its veil, or dying with him, as being of no further significance; since the ceremonial worship, which was kept up in the temple, was abolished by the death of Christ.

Now was the great day of atonement, wherein our Lord, as the great high priest, by his own blood entered into the holy place, now it was he rent the veil of sin, that interposed as a thick cloud between us and God; now it was that he removed the flaming sword, and opened a new and living way to the tree of life.

YEA, the dead were alarmed at the mighty shock, and awoke at the noise. "The graves were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept, arose after his resurrection, went into the holy city, and appeared

pea
A
ciem
who
fore
nisha
their
to
are
fice
thof
title
their
ral r
T
our
inde
biou
some
to co
pain
of fu
salva
suffer
reder
and f
much
passa
* C
Theop

peared unto many," Matth. xxvii. 51, 53.

WHETHER those saints were the ancient patriarchs, or the martyrs, or those who lived in Christ's time, and died before him? And whether, after having finished their testimony, they retired to their graves, or accompanied our Lord to heaven, which is most probable, are are things not revealed. It should suffice us, that hereby we are assured, that those who died before Christ, were entitled to the benefit of his death, and that their appearance is an earnest of the general resurrection.

THESE were the miracles by which our Lord was honoured at his death; and indeed it was but requisite that so approbious an exit should be attended with some signal emanations of divine power to conduct people beyond the shame and pain, to consider the spiritual signification of such a death: thus the "captain of salvation was made perfect through sufferings." completed the work of our redemption by the effusion of his blood, and finished his mediatorial course through much tribulation, and made the cross his passage into glory.*

M 2

He

* Consummationem hoc loco gloriam ipsam intellige.
Theophylact.

HE was always perfect in himself, but not in his mediatorial office, till he had made a full end of the sufferings he was to undergo. If he had not died, he had not been made perfect.

“ HE was called by God to suffering,
 “ that he might be perfect as mediator,
 “ that the justice of God might, as it
 “ were, quench its thirst in his blood,
 “ and the mercy of God rise out of that
 “ sea of blood : and perfect also as a pat-
 “ tern, for in that his humility, charity,
 “ patience appeared in the highest man-
 “ ner to the sons of men for their imita-
 “ tion.

“ IT became God as the righteous
 “ sovereign of all things, to have his
 “ justice vindicated, and as the end of all
 “ things to have the glory of his attri-
 “ butes exalted. Had not Christ suffer-
 “ ed, he had not been a perfect saviour,
 “ neither faithful to God nor merciful to
 “ Man ; because without blood, justice
 “ had not been satisfied, and so sin, the
 “ great hinderence of salvation, had not
 “ been expiated.

HE was active as well as passive upon the cross, for it was there he made an end of transgression, by the bringing in of an ever-

everlasting righteousness ; it was there he disarmed death and the law of their terrors ; it was there he prevailed against the gates of hell, overthrew the kingdom of darkness, and purchased liberty for captives.

WHEN the Roman empire became christian, the punishment of the cross was put down by Constantine the great, who published an edict to forbid the sentencing any person to this sort of death, which has been observed ever since throughout all Christendom. Such was the veneration of that good emperor, for our holy Saviour, that he would not suffer any criminals to suffer death in the same manner as he did.

AH blessed Jesus! Who can describe that love that made thee endure the pain and scandal of the cross! Seest thou him not, O my soul, fastened to the tree, conflicting with his Father's wrath, and groaning under the burden of our sins. Look how his whole body is stretched and racked, his hands and feet penetrated by nails, his side pierced. and how miserably the thorns torment his head!

SEE how his looks are changed, his cheeks pale, his blood running, his neck

too weak to support his head, which lies a dying on his bleeding breast! Look how the Redeemer shakes and stirs his dying limbs! What gasps and sighs he fetches! Hear ye not his dying groans, and dolorous cries, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me."

AN sinful wretch! thy trespass was his punishment. "He was bruised for our iniquities." Why then do we complain of the Jews, and find no fault with ourselves, who are more guilty? They were the instruments, we the procurers of his sufferings. Our sins were the traitors which delivered him by the hands of Judas, and indeed were the principle actors of that woful tragedy.

WE by our sins impeached him, the spiteful priests who accused him, were but our agents, and his executioners our representatives: the rude multitude who insulted him, were but acting our part. It was thy sins, O my soul, that crucified the Lord of glory, thy hypocrisy the kiss that betrayed him, thy pride and covetousness the thorns that crowned him, thy oppression and cruelty the nails that pierced him thy lukewarmness the knee that mocked him, thy contempt of religion
the

the spittle that defiled his face, thy anger and bitterness the vinegar and gall which he drunk. Vid. devout communicant.

AN what shall I do, who, by my sins, have so tormented my dearest Lord! Ah what contrition of heart can be great enough! What hatred of my crimes can be commensurate to those sad accidents they have produced! Is it nothing to thee, O my soul, that thy Redeemer has suffered so much for thy sins? Blessed Jesus, enlighten my benighted understanding, that I may see the transcendency of thy love in the bitterness of thy passion, and be moved by it to love thee more and serve thee better.

THE odiousness of sin is conspicuous in the ruin of fallen angels, and the misery of mankind, but nothing discovers so much of its malignant nature, as the precious blood shed for it; the universal and constant purity of our Lord's life, his intercessions and tears, could not atone for sin, without dying for it. How deadly was that distemper for which the Son of God must bleed to cure it? How venomous were those spots of sin, which tears without blood could not wipe off?

LORD,

LORD, how evil does sin appear in the deadly wounds of thy dear Son! With what pious indignation should we look upon it! When Antonius the Roman senator would provoke the people to revenge the death of Cæsar, their emperor, he caused the bloody robe in which he was murdered, to be brought out, saying to the people, " Behold the blood of your late emperor!" This he did, that the sight of his imperial robes died in blood, might raise their indignation against Brutus and Cassius, who assassinated him. And should not the sight of a bleeding Saviour much more incense our minds against sin, and work in us a disposition to revenge ourselves upon it by serious repentance.

V. MAKE proper reflections upon the administration of mercy and justice in the case of fallen men and angels.

HERE mercy and justice shine by their native light but with this strange difference in their application, that mercy does not take in all the miserable, that are its proper objects; nor, on the other hand, does justice seize on all the guilty, that of right fall to its share: yet there

is

is an
attri
anot
in th
the p
T
only
the t
at th
daine
ence
plant
regio
of ap
T
" W
" sho
" an
" wa
the b
angel
worm
and a
who c
ST
shoul
gold,
wond
least,

is an exact harmony between these two attributes that seem irreconcilable to one another, for the sin is punished by justice in the surety, and pardoned by mercy in the penitent sinner.

THE beams of grace shined warm, not only upon standing angels that were near the throne, but on fallen men, who were at the greatest distance from it, but disdained to communicate the least influence to miserable angels: nay, more, he plants a new colony of these men in the regions above, to fill up the vacant seats of apostate spirits,

THIS is matter of just admiration; "Why mercy the milder attribute, should be exercised towards fallen man, and justice the severer attribute towards fallen angels!" Why mortals, the baser sort, should be preferred above angels the most noble creatures? Why worms of the earth should be esteemed and advanced above those glorious beings, who once had been stars of glory?

STRANGE! That men, vessels of clay, should be chosen, and angels, vessels of gold, be rejected. Among the various wonders of the loadstone, this is not the least, that it draws iron to it, and not gold

gold. Thus angels, those golden pieces of the creation, are left in the pit of destruction, while men, the inferior and drossy part of the world, are, by the arms of divine love, drawn out of it.

O the riches of discriminating grace! Who can think of this difference without the highest transport of affections to the great reconciler, who would neither prevent the fall of angels, nor relieve them in their fallen state? How wonderful is this dispensation of mercy and justice! We were obnoxious to justice as well as angels, and they stood in as much need of mercy as we, yet we only are restored, they are exposed to the hatred of a righteous God, while we, polluted dust and ashes, are taken into his bosom. We were as loathsome as sin could make us, yet he espoused us to himself.

BEHOLD the goodness and severity of God! When man had reduced himself to the lowest ebb of misery, then God opened a fountain of fresh goodness in the promise of a saviour, and in the fullness of time sent his dear and dutiful Son to suffer for the children of disobedience: But fallen angels, who had reduced themselves into the same miserable condition, are left in their chains, and denied the
least

least
gry
they
bow
but
no c
L
we,
ed w
left
and
port
desti
child
Had
smile
no.
S
befor
say,
us a
cond
are
retur
what
VI
ed w
M
retur

least relief. They groan under the angry resentments of God ; O what would they give for the least soundings of his bowels, for the minuteſt glimpſe of hope ! but he that made them is reſolved to have no compaſſion upon them.

LORD, what are we, dead dogs, that we, and not fallen angels ſhould be viſited with thy ſalvation ! How is it they are left in the diſtreſs of an eternal deſpair, and not we ? How came we to be the portion of thy inheritance, and they left deſtitute and naked ? Were not we the children of wrath by nature as well as they ? Had we any thing more to allure the ſmiles of thy goodneſs than they had ? No, no.

SHOULDST thou, O Lord, ſummon us before thy bar, not a word have we to ſay, why judgment ſhould not paſs upon us as well as upon them ; yet they are condemned to endless ſufferings, and we are ſpared. This calls for all poſſible returns of gratitude and ſervice. Lord, what ſhall we render ?

VI. LOVE, as thoſe who are privileged with ſuch diſtinguiſhing grace.

MY ſon give me thy heart, is all the return he demands from the redeemed ;
this

this tribute of affection and acknowledgement which he requires, can be paid in no coin but that of love. He loved us, and not fallen angels, and shall not the flames of redeeming love, kindle in our breasts a reciprocal affection? shall not we return a drop for an ocean of love?

WHEN we give him the supremacy of our love, how little is it compared with what he deserves; when wound up to the highest pitch, it comes infinitely short of what he discovered to us. The three sacred persons challenge an equal share in our esteem and affectionate regards.

I. THE highest strains of affection are due to God the Father, the original spring of our salvation.

To him we owe the method, as well as the happy contrivance of our recovery. As the first motion was from him, so it was by his command, that Christ died for us. He is a mediator by the will of God, who set him the copy he writes after, therefore it is said, "he was faithful to him who appointed him, Heb. iii. 2. Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God, and our Father," Gal. i. 4. What, our Lord Redeemer

Redeemer did and suffered, was by the special appointment of the Father.

EVEN the merit of Christ is grounded on the grace of God, it is called the free gift of God, and the "gift by grace, which by Christ abounded unto many," Rom. v. 15, 16.

THE blessings purchased by Christ, spring from the Father, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings--in Christ," Eph. i. 3. Whatever Christ did as mediator, the Father was the authoritative actor in those works. "The Father who dwells in me, he doth the works," John xiv. 10.

IN order to restore us, he cloaths his Son with our nature, and being found in fashion as a man, he sheathed the sword of Justice in his tender bowels, to divert the fatal stroke from us. But for this wonderful contrivance of the Father we had perished for ever: and shall not we love him, who so loved us? Even publicans love those that love them, and shall his love, who is the first source of our redemption, make no impression upon us?

SINCE our salvation was contrived by the Father's wisdom, not to love him
N for

for so inestimable a benefit, argues not only the height of ingratitude, but a profane contempt of it. If the most exalted affections are due to him for making us out of nothing, much more are they due to him for our deliverance from hell.

DEAR God! what shall I render? What! didst thou counsel and command thy Son to shed his blood to preserve mine? Didst thou appoint the heir of all things to be a servant to rebels, and to give his life a ransom for them? O that I were qualified with a heart to love so kind a God! O wonderful goodness! Lord, I admire those miracles of divine love that appear in the redemption of miserable men! "O that I could sing to the Lord a new song!"

2. THE most fervent acts of love are due to our incarnate Redeemer.

To redeem us was not his duty, as a son, but a voluntary act, as our mediator. He was under no obligation to save us, till he had engaged himself by promise: If he had refused to answer for us, we had perished irrecoverably. But he gave himself for us, the innocent for the criminal. Behold how he loved us! Love is the first spring of all he did and endured

dured for us. Our misery might excite his pity, but his affection made him a man of sorrows.

LOVE was the only impulse, love sent him, love offered him. It was love to us that made him leave the throne of his glory, and submit to a death that had all the marks of disgrace and vengeance annexed to it. If therefore he had no inherent attractives, yet the very thoughts of what he suffered for us, should render him infinitely precious to us. Enemies did not give him, nature did not give him, but he offered up himself a sacrifice to God for us; yea, "and was straitened till he was baptized with that bloody baptism," Luke xii. 50. How earnestly did he desire our salvation? It was a kind of death to him not to die.

HIS life was a scene of sufferings, but the work that was attended with so many difficulties, he undertook and accomplished with the utmost alacrity and joy. And, did he suffer on our account? O let our return be love! Shall not his agonies in the garden, where he sweat thick drops of blood in our service, sensibly touch our hearts? Shall not the horrors of his soul on the cross melt our congealed affections? Shall not that stupendous love

that carried him through all the pains of crucifixion, overcome us with ingenuous amazement? Ah how can we think of what he did and suffered for an apostate world, without passionate mournings of love!

HE freely left his throne to be nailed to an infamous tree; though he was the prince of life, yet cheerfully submits to the severity of a violent and approbrious death: he died to save those whose sins had murdered him. And does not this call for the most raised affections? He was called to suffer, we to love; he to die, we to live.

OUR dearest comforts are to be utterly disvalued and renounced, when put in competition with the Redeemer; "If any man," says he, "come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple," Luke xiv. 26. q. d. Our love to a saviour should so far exceed our affections to these relatives, that on all occasions wherein they would divide us from Christ, we should behave ourselves towards them, as if we had only an indifferency of affection, yea, an aversion for them. The hatred required here is only

only comparative, that is, a lesser love, We must love them with a lesser degree of love: set Christ on the throne, and them at the footstool. "He who prefers any thing before him, is not worthy of him."

OUR deliverance from the wrath to come, and the charter by which we are entitled to heaven, are the great blessings he has procured for us, but we must not overlook his love in those dark hours, wherein he purchased them. If we allow Christ's love to shine brighter in some periods than others, his suffering moments will put in their claim. His passion therefore should render him as dear as his purchase, if not more so; for his love in giving us a crown of immortality is not so great as his dying for us on the accursed tree. In offering up himself a sacrifice of atonement, he discovers a higher affection than in bestowing upon us mansions of glory.

NOT to love a crucified saviour is a horrible crime, and more criminal in his eye, than the hatred of devils: they hate him who punished them, we disregard him who died to save us from eternal punishment: they sinned against him under the vials of his wrath, we under

showers of mercy and grace. If they hate him, it is because he torments them; but what reason can we assign for not loving him? May they say, Lord, if we don't love thee, it is because thou dost not love us, never didst thou intercede, much less weep and die for us. But can we say so? No, no.

So much love, so much religion. Men are not as their opinion, but as their affections are, for a wicked man may be orthodox in judgment, and destitute of true affection to the great Redeemer. A man may be sound in the faith, and rotten at heart. Knowledge without love is no better than the knowledge of devils, who believe and tremble.

IN religion, what the heart does not, is not in God's account done at all. Love is the altar that sanctifies the offering, or that which renders it acceptable to God. Love is acceptable of itself, but nothing acceptable without it, this is it that spiritualizes our worship. Blessed Jesus! bind me therefore to thyself with the chains of sacred love. O dissolve these bonds by which I am tied to a vile and vain world! In flame my coldness with the fire of thy love! O that it would now kindle in my soul!

ONE

ONE great end of God's manifestation in our nature is, that he might appear amicable, and have a return of affection. Every thought of him should be attended with a motion suitable to the discovery of so great a love. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive blessing and honour, glory and power for ever and ever.

3. THE holy Spirit also claims a share in your grateful returns.

AN equal affection is due to the Spirit, who is equally concerned with the Father and Son in our redemption: it was by his efficiency that Christ was formed and fitted for that great work, and that we are translated from darkness to light.

THE body of our Lord was framed by the powerful energy of the Spirit; it was by his almighty hand, that the divine and human nature were so admirably united in him. He had the spirit above measure, not only to qualify him for the mediatorial office, but to support him in the execution of it. Upon this account the spirit demands a right to our best affections. O blessed Spirit, didst thou form and fit the Saviour for my service! O form my heart for thy praise! O that I
had

had the tongue of an angel, to sing hallelujah to the holy Spirit, the sanctifier and comforter.

BESIDES, it is by the operations of the spirit that our minds are illuminated, and that our dead souls are quickened: it is he that refines our polluted nature, and makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of light. As the formation of Christ in the womb of the virgin was by the omnipotence of the Spirit, so our new nature, and spiritual acts in worship are produced by his influences.

It is he that enlightens and enlivens the dark and drowsy mind, that fires the heart with a divine flame, that refines our drossy affections, and elevates them above the sphere of sensible entertainments; it is he that causes the word, that spiritual seed to fructify, and encrease to a glorious harvest.

O blessed Spirit! breath on these dry bones, cause the spirit of light, life, and love to enter into them; inspire my soul with sincere affections to thyself, and lead my sins captives to the dominion of grace! O merciful Father, save me by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost! I know not what to pray for as I ought, O let the Spirit
itself

itself make intercession for me with groanings that cannot be uttered !

SEND, O Lord, the spirit of thy Son into my heart, crying, Abba Father ; and let it bear witness with my spirit, that I am of the number of thy children, while others are sowing to the flesh. O enable me by thy grace to be sowing to the spirit, that so of the spirit I may reap life everlasting.

O blessed Spirit, enlighten my mind with a divine ray, that I may see my path in a world of snares ! O sweeten my enjoyments, and sanctify my afflictions ! Conduct me through the remaining difficulties of the wilderness, carry on and perfect the work of faith with power.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Some peculiarities of God's love in redemption, considered, viz. That man should be more loved than angels, good and bad, than Adam in innocency, than Christ himself in some respects. Directions how to improve the condition of fallen angels. In it we see the malignity of sin, weakness of the creature, the insufficiency of his sufferings to satisfy the demands of justice. The necessity of perseverance.

THAT we may yet be more affected with this instance of divine goodness I shall briefly touch on some of those peculiarities that give a distinguishing lustre to redeeming love, and then conclude the whole with proper reflections upon the state of fallen angels, and shew what use we should make of it,

I. **T**HE peculiarities of redeeming love.

I shall only instance in four things as peculiar and wonderful, viz. That man should

should be restored and not angels, that fallen man should be dignified above standing angels. That sinful man should have greater favours conferred upon him than man in innocency. That man should in some respects be preferred before Christ. In general.

I. THAT fallen man should be pitied, and not fallen angels.

HERE let us review what has been said, and renew our admiration. Strange ! he should save the human race, and pass by the world of angels, when both had equally incurred his displeasure. The Son of God had no command to assume their nature, nor have they any call or encouragement to repent and reform ; their first rebellion proved fatal, and ushered in their irrecoverable ruin.

THE dreadful sentence which was executed as soon as they rebelled, is never to be repealed. No time allowed them to consider what they had done, and to repent of it, but were immediately cast down to hell.

“ WE were as fit objects of justice as
 “ they, and they as fit objects of mercy
 “ as we ; yea, they seemed fitter objects
 “ of divine love than we, in regard of
 “ the

“ the eminence of their nature above
 “ ours : one angel excels in endowments
 “ of mind, vastness of understanding,
 “ greatness of power, all the sons of
 “ men.

“ THEY were more capable to love
 “ and serve him, and because of the acute-
 “ ness of their apprehension, more able
 “ to have a due estimate of such a re-
 “ demption, had it been offered them ;
 “ yet the goodness which had created
 “ them so comely, would not lay out it-
 “ self in restoring the beauty they had
 “ defaced. Not one devil spared, not
 “ one apostate spirit recovered, not one
 “ of those eminent creatures restored ;
 “ every one of them has only a prospect
 “ of misery, without any glimpse of re-
 “ covery.”

THEY were ruined by the commission
 of one sin, and we redeemed after the
 commission of infinite numbers of sins.
 Ah Lord ! how is it so many fallen men
 are recovered and saved, and not one
 fallen angel ? What greater malignity in
 their offence, that thou wouldst never
 vouchsafe to bestow one propitious look
 upon them.

GOD condescends to treat with rebel-
 lious man, but leaves them without so
 much

much as a shadow of hope to refresh them in their tormenting flames. In their first sin the last spark of a comfortable life was for ever extinguished: their sad and sorrowful night must never see a morning, when, through the "tender mercies of our God, the day spring from on high hath visited us," their confederates in rebellion, Luke i, 78. the orient, the morning light, the rising sun, i. e. the Messiah, the Sun of Righteousness, Mal. iv. 2. So the French, *Par lesquelles l' Orient d' Enhant nous a visitez.*

2. IN particular. That fallen man should in some respects seem to be more loved than standing angels, is another wonder of redeeming love.

THAT grace which confirms them in their happy station is wonderful, but comes short of that love which rescues us from our miserable state. Our recovery from the lowest hell is a nobler instance of grace, than their happy establishment in the highest heaven. They are continued in their happiness, without knowing what it is to be miserable: never had any experimental knowledge of evil; no, not so much as the least touch of a painful thought: but when Christ came to save

us, we were involved in the utmost misery, and had nothing in view but a miserable eternity. Now, for God to knock off our chains, and restore us to favour, is an instance of warmer affection, than if we had continued therein without revolting.

BESIDES, our near reliance to God-redeemer confers upon us a superior dignity; the standing angels, who behold his face with effable joy, are not so intimately united to him by the bonds of nature, as we are by the bonds of faith.

HE never honoured the nature of angels in taking it upon him, as he did ours; and his sufferings in our nature were no more for them than for fallen angels: the holy angels, who are confirmed in their happiness, having never offended God, need no redeemer, nor atoning sacrifice.

OUR dear Saviour was crucified, not for those sinless and happy spirits, but for us polluted and sinful mortals; though they stood in no need of his death to atone for sin, because they never had committed any, yet may be said to want his grace for their confirmation; it is thro' Christ they are incorporated, and become one with the church, "That he might gather together in one all things in Christ,

both

both which are in heaven and on earth, even in him," Eph. i. 10.

IT is by him that they are fixed in a state of invariable felicity, not strictly as Redeemer, but as the constituted head of all things. If he be not their mediator, they come under him as an exalted head, and pay divine adoration to him, they are subject to his dominion, (as all power is given to him in heaven and earth,) but not as a crucified Saviour; for in that relation and capacity, fallen man is only concerned with him.

THE angels in heaven are happy indeed, but there is not that vast ocean of love in their establishment, as there is in our reconciliation by the blood of Jesus: the divine goodness in the continuance of their felicity is very admirable, but not parallel with that amazing grace which rescues our miserable souls from destruction. And thus the grace of God in the work of redemption surmounts his goodness to the standing angels.

3. IT is farther wonderful, that the favour of God to fallen man should in some respects be greater than that to Adam before the fall.

THAT the triumphs of grace in the creation of Adam, are inferior to those of mercy in his redemption, is evident ; for, in creation, man was taken out of the womb of nothing ; in redemption, God rescues him out of the grave of hell. To form man out of nothing, and invest him with the privileges of paradise, does not import so great a kindness as his deliverance from the gulf of misery, into which he had precipitated himself by sin.

THOSE beams of love that shone on Adam in innocency disappear, and hide their face at the sight of the Sun of Righteousness, that vouchsafes to shine upon apostate man. God's stipulating with upright Adam was an instance of a very condescending temper ; but to covenant with him after his perfidious revolt, is a far greater condescension in the divine sovereignty.

“ FOR God to treat with an innocent
 “ creature made of earth, is stooping to
 “ some kind of equality with dust and
 “ ashes ; but to enter into bonds with
 “ man in his rebellious state, is astonish-
 “ ing beyond expression, This is not,
 “ O Lord, after the manner of men !
 “ The very thoughts of such transcen-
 “ dent

“ dent grace will overcome us with just
 “ and eternal amazement.”

IN the transactions before the fall there was a righteous good man for a holy good God ; but in the federal agreement after the fall, there was a polluted sinful man for a righteous pure God. It was an act of extraordinary grace in God to put himself under any engagement to man before the fall ; but to enter into a covenant of grace with him after his apostacy, is infinitely more astonishing, and must be resolved into that love which passes all understanding.

THE covenant of friendship made with Adam in innocency was pregnant with great and innumerable blessings ; but the covenant of reconciliation made with him after the fall, is enriched with greater privileges : the dispensation of works under which he was made, was very good ; but the covenant of grace, under which he is redeemed, is furnished with richer displays of goodness. Therefore Christ is said to be the “ Mediator of a better covenant, established upon better promises.” Better than that made with Adam, as well as with Moses.

Q. How better? A. In the covenant of grace, there is a promise of pardon.

and sanctification to the penitent believer after the commission of sin, and of acceptance upon our sincere, though imperfect obedience. These are mercies peculiar to the new covenant, mercies which the law given to holy Adam was utterly unacquainted with. No room for repentance under that administration.

It is true, that by the dispensation in innocency, God had made sufficient provision against the entrance of sin, but none for its removal, when once it had entered. Adam, when created, was sufficiently guarded against sin, but no promise of pardon was made to him in case of disobedience. No expedient for the removal of sin was ever discovered, till God entered into a covenant of grace with our first parents, which was after their fall.

To these considerations, let me add, that Adam's paradise was upon earth, the footstool of God, and common receptacle of birds and beasts: but the redeemed's paradise is in heaven, the palace of the supreme Being, and residence of holy spirits.

ADAM stood by himself in the righteousness of a creature, a weak and fallible
bottom

bottom ; believers stand in Christ, the impregnable rock, whose righteousness is that of God-man, divine and durable. Adam's primitive state was mutable and obnoxious to fatal vicissitudes, but heaven the inheritance of believers is unchangeable. Paradise brought forth death, but heaven is the sanctuary of life. How soon did Adam forfeit his royal dignity and dominion ? But the redeemed of the Lord are advanced to heaven, a region not subject to mutability.

MOREOVER, our bodies, that now are base and vile, shall in the resurrection appear, and for ever remain more glorious than the bodies of our first parents in their paradisaical state. Thus man is restored with signal advantages, raised out of his ruins with greater splendor, and dignified with higher honours than what were conferred upon holy Adam, which made one of the pious ancients say, " O how happily did I fall in Adam, who rose again more happily in Christ.---

4. THE father's affection to mankind in some instances, seems to be greater than that to his Son.

THUS, in matters of commutative justice, as in a purchase what we buy, we reckon

reckon more valuable than what we part with : this superiority of love, the apostle seems to assert, when he says, " God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son for it," John iii. 16. This is, if we may so speak, the utmost bounds we can conceive of divine love. How can his affections amount to a higher pitch ? What could he have done more for man than to give his dear Son a ransom for him.

How unsearchable are the treasures of grace ! God transfers the punishment of sin from us unto the blessed Jesus, who had no sin, and demands the utmost satisfaction from him, though we were the real criminals. Miraculous love ! the righteous Jesus is punished for unrighteous sinners, the innocent Jesus suffers for guilty transgressors ! Shall not the thoughts of such love overcome me with admiration and amazement ? What, God blessed for ever, die for me, for me a cursed ungodly sinner ! Lord, what manner of love is this !

IN order to advance our fallen nature, the Father degrades his Son, and unites his glorious nature to our vile flesh, to dissolve our unhappy union with sin : he dies on the bloody altar, to prevent our
eternal

eternal death: thus God prefers our everlasting happiness before the temporal felicity of his Son, He sent him into this lower world, the element of sin and sorrow, to bring us to heaven, the seat of divine purity and perfection.

How ardent and affecting is this love of God, who valued our salvation above the life of his only begotten Son! Lord, is not the blood of thy Son of more value than all thy creation? And shall this blood be shed for us, who by sin are become the most contemptible part of the created globe? Why didst thou sheath thy sword in his bowels, and not into ours, who were thy avowed enemies?

WHEN Christ prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Why was not his request granted? Why, to convince the world how he valued the manifestation of his love to man above the preservation of his Son's life. He was made a curse for us, that we, who were under the curse of the law, might inherit the blessing. He was bruised by his Father's wrath, to prevent our falling under it. He became poor to enrich our base and bankrupt nature. The splendor of his glorious divinity was under a temporary eclipse, to make those, who are darkness

darkness by nature, light in the Lord, and at last endured the pain and scandal of the cross, that he might exempt us from infernal sorrow, and invest us with a crown of glory.

II. THE next thing, is to improve the condition of fallen angels.

THEIR fall and irrecoverable misery deserves the consideration of our most serious thoughts. And, O how can we think of it without horror? Such awful and tremendous truths are not to be forgot, or slightly touched, but to be had in perpetual remembrance.

THE sin and punishment of angels teach us four things, viz. The transcendent malignity of sin. Weakness of creatures in their highest glory. The insufficiency of creatures sufferings to satisfy justice: and necessity of persevering grace.

I. IN the fall and punishment of angels, we see the transcendent malignity of sin.

THE evil of it seems to preponderate the native goodness of angels: yea, says one of our old divines, "There is more evil in the least sin, than there is good
in

in the angels ; therefore, we see one sin conquered some of that noble order of beings, and deprived them of their original happiness. Sin turned glorious angels into deformed devils, which it could never have done, if the evil of it had not been more than all the good in them. So great is the malignity of sin, that being put into the balance of divine justice, it would outweigh all the good works of all the saints, though they were a thousand times more, and greater than they are. Bolton's fast sermon before the H. of C. and bishop Taylor's contempla.

AGAIN, the everlasting sufferings of fallen angels declare the evil of sin to be unconceivably great. Who can describe the nature of that evil, which draws the irreconcilable displeasure of God upon his own creatures? How evil that sin which has laid the foundation of their calamitous eternity, that turned so many glorious angels into firebrands of hell? O sinful sin ! that hast stripped them of their enhappying endowments, and at the same time exposed them to the vengeance of that fire " Whose mysterious property is always to torment, but never to consume."

WHO

WHO can express the malignity of that first sin, for which they were eternally banished from the presence of the God that made them? Daily think of their agonies, and let those thoughts quicken our resentments against sin.

Our great Redeemer, who had no iniquity of his own, was a great mourner for sin; and shall we, who are infected with the plague of sin, sit still, and not be concerned at the miseries it has introduced into the world of angels as well as of mankind.

THE holy angels do, after their manner, grieve for it: the Jewish doctors speak of them as weeping for sin; and in particular, one of them tells us, that in an ancient Mahometan book he finds this answer of God to Moses, viz. "Even about this throne of mine, there stand those, and they are many, that shed tears for the sins of men." *Suo modo.* Bez.

AND can we, poor miserable sinners, think of sin without tears, regret, and lamentation? Has it ruined angels, and will it spare us? It cast them from their thrones into the fiery furnace, and will it be kinder to us? Is it not the greatest of all evils, and the cause of them? How many

many poor creatures has it involved in eternal miseries? How does it triumph over its captives? How restless are they in that bed of flames, which sin has prepared for them?

Alas sinful sin! Will nothing short of the eternal ruin of men and angels satisfy thy rage? Who can describe the condition of reprobates? How doleful their case, who feel nothing at present but most exquisite sorrows, and have nothing in view but the eternal duration of them. The most racking pain on earth gives but a faint idea of those painful sensations that know no end.

2. IN the apostacy of angels we may see the weakness of the creature in his highest capacity.

CREATED nature, though refined to the highest degree, is but feeble and frail, if left to itself. How soon were angels ruined, though there was no outward enemy to assault them, they were created in an upright state, but their native uprightness did not prove an effectual restraint against their apostacy.

EVEN the holy angels who are now in glory would soon rebel, if left to the con-

P

duct.

duct of their own understanding and counsel, as creatures they are mutable, and consequently have in them a remote capacity of sinning, their standing is from the divine will; though exempt from corruption, yet they are not pure in the sight of him who is of infinite purity; hence God is said to charge them with folly, not only because their wisdom is folly compared with that of God's, but because they have a possible folly in their nature, as creatures, to be charged with. Job iv. 18.

HE puts no trust in angels; because they are mutable beings: he will not trust them with their own happiness; if he did, it is very probable they would soon leave their first estate, as well as the fallen angels. Changeableness being inseparable from a creature as such, the holy angels are still mutable in their nature. No creature is naturally immutable.

THE blessed angels, it is true, are unchangeably holy and happy: yet, as created beings, their condition is alterable. None but the eternal Jehovah being immutable by nature, their confirmation in glory is not from the force of nature, but the effect of supernatural grace.

grace. They are advanced above the danger of sinning, but this glorious privilege is not essential to them as creatures, for as such they have still in their nature a possibility to transgress.

AND as to our first parents, how soon did the mutability of their nature evidence itself? No sooner were they made after the image of God, but they exchanged it for that of the devil. How soon did their morning sun set in a cloud? And if our nature was thus weak in its primitive glory, O what is it now in its corrupted state? If holy Adam fell, how unable are polluted sinners to stand? If he in a state of purity forsook his God, it is no wonder we do so in our defiled condition.

If Adam did immediately sin himself out of paradise, ah, how quickly should we sin ourselves into hell, were we not preserved by the arms of infinite grace? If innocent Adam, who had strength to stand, fell so wretchedly, how wonderful is it that we, who are impotent and feeble worms, don't fall oftener?

“ HE that would ask angels and Adam
 “ what was the reason of their fall, would
 “ receive no other answer, but because
 P 2 “ depend-

“ they were creatures, and that their
“ strength was unsuccessful, because it
“ depended upon their own will.”

3. IF creatures cannot be their own keepers, much less their own faviours.

THE miseries of fallen angels tell us, how the sufferings of mere creatures are not sufficient to satisfy justice, so as to procure the favour of an offended God. About six thousand years are elapsed since they began to suffer, but are now as far from making satisfaction, as they were the first moment they entered on their sorrowful state. And how can they? If we consider, they are beings of a limited nature; and that there is no proportion between the sufferings of such, and the infinite majesty of God, who is abused by sin. When the sentence was passed upon them, they began to satisfy by suffering; but alas! When will the work be finished? O never, never, never, so as to merit their deliverance from that place of torment.

WILL the sufferings of innumerable years make a sufficient recompence for the wrong offered to God by sin? No. Since, therefore, they are not able to satisfy

tisfy at once, they must be doing it by time lengthened out to eternity.

AN infinite satisfaction must be made to God, one way or other. Now, since their sufferings are infinite in quality and value, as those of our Lord were, they must be infinite in time and duration. It was the immense dignity of our Redeemer's person, that rendered his short sufferings equivalent to an endless duration of punishment, and of greater value in God's account than the everlasting punishment of reprobates.

4. THE fall of angels shews the necessity of persevering grace.

THE want of this blessing ruined them, the promise of it to those, who "by patient continuance in well-doing, look for glory, honour, and immortality, is our security. Our Saviour's request to his Father to keep his people, imports they were too feeble to secure themselves, John xvi. 11.

OUR perseverance is the fruit of his intercession. If not guarded by the continued influences of his prayer and power, we should be as so many feathers in every wind of temptation, and be soon swept

swept away by the torrents of natural corruption.

THE watchmen of Israel resides in the supreme court, where audience and acceptance is never denied him on their behalf, who “work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

IF the original stock of grace conferred on angels could not preserve them from the infection of sin, O what need have we to redouble our addresses for renewed help! If their holy nature was not a sufficient guard against apostacy, Lord, how unable are we to keep our ground, were we our own keepers, as Adam was in innocency? How soon would the greatest stock of grace impair and die? the holy angels were no sooner left to themselves, but became a prey to a ruinous temptation.”

MAY I never be of their number, who begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh! Lord, establish my heart with thy grace, and send in fresh recruits of vital influences! O deliver me from myself, for in a worse hand than my own, thou canst not leave me. Preserve me by thy Almighty

(156)

mighty power through faith unto salvation. Encircle my endangered soul with the glorious arms of omnipotence! Let thy divine power and promise be my eternal keepers! O suffer not the lamp of my profession to go out in darkness, for want of new supplies of grace to maintain it.

F I N I S.



